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ABSTRACT

The connection between parental alcohol abuse and adolescent life stress, adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away is explored in this study of 907 adolescents ranging in age from 12-17. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not alcohol abuse and running away can be viewed as a response to, or an escape from stress. It is reported that the majority of runaways say they left home because of family problems, including parental alcohol abuse. A population of two groups, runaway and non-runaway, was used in this study to test for a correlation between parental alcohol abuse and adolescent running away. A questionnaire was administered to the entire population of 907 adolescents and a Life Events Inventory (LEI) was administered to a sub-sample of these adolescents. Final analysis of the questionnaire data supported positive correlations between adolescent alcohol abuse, running away and parental alcohol abuse. The analysis also showed similarities in drinking patterns for runaways and non-runaways. The results indicated, however, that despite many similar characteristics between runaways and non-runaways, differences existed between these two groups. It was found that parental alcohol use/abuse is one of the most significant factors in adolescents's drinking. (RLV)

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ADOLESCENT LIFE STRESS AS A PREDICTOR OF ALCOHOL ABUSE AND/OR RUNAWAY BEHAVIOR

Therese van Houten
Research Director
and
Gary Golembiewski
Research Assistant

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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NATIONAL YOUTH ALTERNATIVES PROJECT
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

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FOREWORD

This publication was developed with a NYAP research grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, HEW (#5-H84-AA01525). Entitled "Alcohol Abuse Among Runaways and Their Families", this combined research and training project has surveyed a national sample of over 900 youths.

The results and research methods of this effort are presented in order to address the needs of theoreticians, policy makers, program planners and youth workers.

This study supports the theory that running away and alcohol abuse are a response to situational stress, including parental alcohol abuse, and family dysfunction. Among its many useful findings, it points out that while runaways do not appear to drink any more or less than non-runaways, they are more likely to drink to avoid stress and to experience conflict and stress as a result of drinking. Such information regarding differential drinking characteristics can be used as a basis for developing effective prevention and/or intervention services for runaways and other youth who are experiencing personal or parental alcohol problems.

I look forward to your comments on this study and suggestions of how we may be of further assistance to you in your work.

William W. Treanor
Executive Director
National Youth Alternatives Project

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, we would like to thank the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for making this study possible. A great debt is owed to the over 1,000 youth who participated in this project. Without their interest and without the support of the runaway centers where they sought counseling and the schools which they attended, this study would not have been possible. A special thank you to the teachers and school counselors who volunteered classroom time: Marcia Hasie in Alexandria, Virginia; Michael McDaniel in Tiffin, Ohio; Elizabeth Kavanaugh in Wheaton, Maryland; Bernadette van Houten in San Francisco and Ellen Foxcroft in Sonora, California.

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Authors:
Therese van Houten, Research Director
Gary Golembiewski, Research Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES v

I. INTRODUCTION

Summary of the 1974-1975 Research Effort 1
Statement of Research Problems and Hypotheses 2
Outline of Remaining Chapters 5

II. ADOLESCENT RUNNING AWAY: LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Overview 8
The Runaway Youth Act 10
Prevalence of Running Away in the Mid-70's 11
Definition of Running Away 11
Who Runs Away? 11
Why Do Youth Run? 13
Runaway Behavior and Alcohol Use 15

III. DEFINITION OF ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE: CONSTRUCTION OF THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM INDEX (API)

Literature Review 19
Alcohol Abuse Definition Used During First Year of Project 24
Construction of the API 26
Validity and Reliability of the API 30

IV. DESCRIPTION OF STUDY POPULATION

Introduction 33
General Demographic Data 34
Characteristics of Running Away Behavior 44
Drinking Behavior 47
Correlation Between Alcohol Use Variables in Runaway Sample 52
Parent's Use of Alcohol 54
Youth's Attitudes and Perceptions of Other's Attitudes Towards Alcohol Use 55

V. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE, PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE AND RUNNING AWAY

Running Away and Alcohol Abuse 58
Parental Alcohol Abuse, Running Away and Adolescent Alcohol Abuse 61
Family Composition 62
Age of Youth 62
Predictive Analysis 63
Summary 63

VI. ADOLESCENT LIFE STRESS: CONSTRUCTION OF THE LIFE EVENTS INVENTORY (LEI)

Review of Literature on Life Stress 65

Procedures for Developing the Life Events Inventory 69
Construction of the LEI 73
Revised Life Events Inventory and Final Scoring System 74

VII. LIFE EVENTS: ITS RELATION TO RUNNING AWAY AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

General Demographic Data 79
Negative Life Stress 80
Parental Alcohol Abuse and Parental Rejection 81
Distribution of Stress Scores Among Sub-population 83

VIII. LIFE STRESS AS A PREDICTOR OF ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE

Introduction 84
Factor Analytic Reduction of Variables 85
Multiple Regression Using Factor Analytically Selected Life Stress Predictors of "Running Away" 88
Analysis of Multiplicative Relationships Between Variables.. 92
Multiple Regression Analysis Using Total Life Stress as a Predictor 92
Conclusion 96

IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Introduction 98
Summary of Findings 100
Discussion of Major Stress Predictors of Running Away and Adolescent Alcohol Abuse 102
Conclusion 105

APPENDICES

A. The Alcohol Index (the API) 107
B. The Life Events Inventory (the LEI) 111

DESCRIPTION OF NYAP SERVICES 115

TABLES

III-1....... Original Runaway Alcohol Problem Score (National Youth Alternatives Project 1974-1975)
III-2....... Alcohol Items Selected for Scoring
III-3....... List of Alcohol Variables: Median Scores (Q2) and Semi-Interquartile Range (Q)
III-4....... Final API Scoring System
IV-1....... Participating Runaway Centers and Number of Respondents Per Center
IV-2....... Runaway Centers with More than 10 Percent Black and/or Hispanic Respondents
IV-3....... Comparison Between HEW and NYAP Findings
IV-4....... Age at Which Youth Started Drinking
IV-5....... Age at Which Youth See Their Drinking as a Problem
IV-6....... Reported Amounts of Alcohol Consumed by Runaways
IV-7....... Reported Frequency of Liquor Consumption Among Runaways
V-1 .... Comparison Between Runaways and Non-Runaways in Response to Individual API Items
V-2 .... Correlation Coefficients of Variables Related to Adolescent Alcohol Abuse and Running Away
V-3 .... Relationship Between Different Degrees of Parental Alcohol Use and Male and Female Running and Drinking Behavior
VI-1....... Final Life Events Inventory and Scoring System
VII-1 ...... Life Events Which Occurred to Over One Out of Five of the Respondents
VII-2 ...... Relative Frequency of Alcohol Abuse Related Life Events
VII-3 ...... Bivariate Correlation Between Parental Alcohol Abuse and Parental Rejection Life Event Items
VIII-1 ..... Correlation Matrix of Four Variables in Hypothesis: Adolescent Running Away, Adolescent Alcohol Abuse, Life Stress and Parental Alcoholism
VIII-2 ..... Correlation Matrix of the Factor Analytic Selected Dependent Variables
VIII-3 ..... Correlation Matrices for Items in the Juvenile Justice and Parental Rejection Factors
VIII-4 ..... Percent Variation in Criterion Running Away Explained by Factor Analytic Selected Life Events and Selected Demographic Variables
VIII-5 ..... Percent Variation in Criterion Running Away Explained by Juvenile Justice Contact, Parental Rejection, School Dropout Status and Selected Demographic Variables
VIII-6 ..... Percent Variation in Criterion Running Away Explained by Total Life Stress, Parental Alcohol Abuse, and Selected Demographic Variables

VIII-7 ..... Regression of API Scores on Selected Variables
VIII-8 ..... Age of Youth and Percentage of Youth Using Alcohol as A Function of Parental Alcohol Abuse
VIII-9 ..... Path Analysis Model with Running Away Regressed on School Dropout Status, Life Stress and Parental Alcohol Abuse
VIII-10 .... Correlation Matrix of running Away, Dropping Out of School, Life Stress and Parental Alcohol Abuse

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Is there a connection between parental alcohol abuse and adolescent life stress, adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away? *Adolescent Life Stress as a Predictor of Alcohol Abuse and/or Runaway Behavior* presents findings of the second year (1975-1976) of the study on Alcohol Abuse Among Runaways and Their Families conducted by the National Youth Alternatives Project (NYAP), and funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA grant #AA 01525). It includes a substudy on the relation of life stress to adolescent running away behavior, prepared by NYAP's researcher, Therese van Houten, for a doctoral dissertation at Catholic University's School of Social Service.

The NYAP alcohol project began in October, 1974. From the very beginning, it had two parallel objectives: to assess the prevalence of alcohol abuse among runaways and their families through research, and to respond to the alcohol abuse needs of this population through training and technical assistance to runaway programs. This report focuses on the research aspects of that project.

This first chapter consists of 4 parts:

- a brief overview of the first year's research effort
- a statement of the research problem and hypotheses
- sampling and selection of respondents
- outline of remaining chapters.

Overview of First Year Effort

NYAP is a non-profit youth service resource and advocacy organization located in Washington, D.C. Its goal is to work cooperatively with public and private agencies to develop innovative social services for youth. NYAP believes that all youth have the right to high quality social service programs which are available to them and responsive to their needs; and that youth have the right to participate in the development, operation and evaluation of such services. Researching the problems of youth and the needs of youth service workers is but one of the ways through which NYAP attempts to reach these goals.

In April 1974, six months prior to the onset of this national project, NYAP sponsored an NIAAA funded exploratory conference on alcohol abuse and runaway youth. Information received during this conference (Contract #ADM 41-74-0012) supported on-going reports from the field indicating that runaways and their families were seriously affected by alcohol abuse. There was, however, no hard data to support these statements.[1] NYAP's initial proposal to NIAAA to undertake this project came in response to the April '74 conference.

From the very beginning, the project simultaneously addressed the issues of assessing the scope of the problem and responding to the problem. During the first year, research focused on determining the youth alcohol abuse needs of individual runaways in 15 nationally representative runaway centers; the response consisted of alleviating that need through training one counselor in each of these runaway programs in youth alcohol abuse prevention and counseling.

The first year survey was designed to examine the hypotheses that: 1) there is an as great, if not greater, amount of alcohol abuse among runaway youth and their families as in the general population; 2) there is a positive correlation between adolescent and parental alcohol abuse. A hypothesis which could not be tested, because of the lack of a non-runaway control group, was the correlation between parental abuse and adolescent running away behavior. This lack of a comparison non-runaway group was one of the major limitations of the first year of the survey.

A second limitation, common to other studies on adolescent alcohol abuse, was the lack of a precise, measurable, operational definition of adolescent alcohol abuse. For this reason, it became necessary to begin the development of an alcohol problem scale based on whys, whens, and effects of drinking: experiencing blackouts, drinking more than peers, combining drugs and alcohol, drinking to avoid stress, being arrested as a result of drinking. Based on the tentative score used during that first year, over half the youth appeared to be heavy users, if not abusers, of alcohol.

Thus, alcohol abuse, like alcohol use, was positively correlated with frequency of running away. There were also indicators of a positive correlation between parental alcohol abuse and youth alcohol abuse, especially in homes where both parents abused alcohol. The first year findings indicated clearly that runaways and their families could benefit from an alcohol counseling capability in runaway programs.

Statement of Research Problem and Hypothesis

Both adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away behaviors, their causes and implications for youth and society, have been the subject of much media attention, social research and conjecture.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not alcohol abuse and running away can be viewed as a response to, or an escape from stress. Are runaways and alcohol abusers responding to the expected adolescent turmoil with impaired coping capacities? Are they responding to excessive stress? Is there a relationship between running away and excessive drinking? Is perhaps parental alcohol abuse

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*Findings of this pilot year are summarized in *A Study of Alcohol Abuse Among Runaway Youth and Their Families* (March, 1976), by William W. Treanor and Therese van Houten, and available through the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia.

a causative factor of and link between adolescent running away and alcohol abuse?

A review of the literature shows that there has been an on-going debate about the etiology of running away and alcohol abuse. Are the causes psychopathological or are they situational? The current consensus is that, for both behaviors, psychopathological and situational factors are closely inter-related. It is not known, however, how much of the psychopathology, such as poor self-esteem and depression, is in fact a response to situational stress.

As the chapter reviewing the literature on runaway behavior indicates, a majority of runaways say they left home because of family problems, including parental alcohol abuse. In addition, most runaways, like alcohol abusers, can be characterized by: poor self-esteem; poorer home situation and more broken homes than non-runaways; delinquency (an important *caveat* must be made here: runaways as a group are very heterogeneous, and generalizations about delinquency are based on the mean or central tendency of study samples); psychopathology (lack of ego strength, poor impulse control, depression, etc.); conflict with their parents; and, stressful life events of the kind linked to adult depression and psychiatric hospitalization.[2] The literature on alcohol abuse points to the following parallel correlates: poor self-image; personality traits such as depression, impulsiveness, hostility; poor family structure and poor communication with parents; lack of a positive committment to school; parental alcohol abuse; desire to reduce anxiety, tension, feelings of inadequacy and juvenile delinquency (especially in "escapist delinquent subcultures").[3] The purpose of this study is to determine the degree of correlation and causality between adolescent stress, parental alcohol abuse, adolescent running away and adolescent alcohol abuse. IT IS HYPOTHESIZED THAT THERE IS A POSITIVE CORRELATION BETWEEN PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE AND YOUTH RUNNING AWAY AND/OR YOUTH ALCOHOL ABUSE, AND THAT THERE IS A POSITIVE CORRELATION BETWEEN LIFE STRESS (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE) AND YOUTH RUNNING AWAY AND ALCOHOL ABUSE BEHAVIOR.

In related research, similar life events have been linked to adult depression, psychiatric hospitalization, psychosomatic illness and adolescent drug abuse. A recent national study on runaways states that "among serious runners and runners who were abused at home, parental alcoholism was the single most mentioned difficulty which prompted the run."[4]

What is the difference between youth who run and/or abuse alcohol in response to stress and those youth who do not? Questions which raise more questions: What is stress? What is coping? What internal or external variables (such as support systems) intervene in the adolescent's coping response to stress?

Clearly, not all these questions can be answered through one study. The purpose of this study is only to explore the relationship between adolescent life stress and parental alcohol abuse and between these variables and the observed behaviors of adolescent running away and alcohol abuse.

Sampling and Selection of Respondents

To test both hypotheses, a population of two groups was used: a study group of runaways and a comparison group of non-runaways. A random selection of either group was beyond the scope and budget of this study. It was decided to use a purposive sample of runaways, querying respondents from known sources of runaway youth; and a convenience sample of high school youth taken from accessible and available sources.

In all, 618 runaways and 289 non-runaways were studied to determine the relationships between parental alcohol abuse, youth alcohol use and abuse and running away behavior. To study the effect of life stress on youth alcohol abuse, a subsample of 98 runaways and 251 non-runaways was used.

As mentioned above, these runaways were *runaways served by runaway centers*. A recent compilation of demographic characteristics of runaway youth served by the Office of Youth Development (DHEW) runaway programs show that in regard to race, sex and family composition, our sample was similar to and therefore representative of the larger national sample (see Chapter 4).

All 907 youth were administered a youth alcohol abuse survey developed by NYAP for the purpose of this study. It includes the Alcohol Problem Index presented in Chapter 3, as well as general demographic questions regarding running away behavior. The survey was pre-tested and revised following the 1974-1975 pilot, with a sample of 480 runaways. Two different versions were prepared: one for runaways; one for non-runaways:

The subsample of 98 runaways and 251 non-runaways was administered a Life Events Inventory (LEI) during the last month of the survey (see Chapter 7).

Both the survey and LEI are paper and pencil tests which can be either self-administered or administered by a trained interviewer. Data was collected from individual runaways by trained youth service workers using a structured interview format. Questionnaires were administered to the high school students in a group setting by high school teachers who had received both telephonic and written instructions from the researchers.

Following administration of each questionnaire, each runaway was interviewed and counseled as necessary, to alleviate unexpected emotional or mental stress resulting from the administration of the questionnaire. High school teachers spent some time following questionnaire administration dealing with feedback and discussing content.

No youth was required to participate in the project. It was explained to them that they were participating in a national study on runaways and that their responses were sequentially coded and no names, addresses, birthdates (only age on last birthday) or other identifying information was collected.

Outline of Remaining Chapters

This report consists of 9 chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on adolescent running away. Chapters 3 and 6 present some background information on the definition of life stress and alcohol abuse and discuss in detail the development of the API (Alcohol Problem Index) and the LEI (Life Events Inventory), the two new instruments developed for this study. Chapter 4 describes the total population of 907 youth, 618 runaways and 289 non-runaways, who participated in the study. Chapter 5 discusses the relationship between parental alcohol abuse and running away behavior based on a multivariate regression analysis of the responses of these 907 youth.

The Life Events Inventory was administered only to a subsample of these 907 youth. Chapter 7 therefore describes this subsample (98 runaways and 251 non-runaways) and relates life stress (including parental alcohol abuse) to youth alcohol abuse and running away. Chapter 8 summarizes the statistical procedures conducted to isolate the most salient stress factors relating to and predicting youth alcohol abuse.

The conclusion, Chapter 9, interprets and summarizes the findings.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

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Wechsler, Henry and Thum, Denise. "Teen-age Drinking, Drug Use, and Social Correlates," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 34 (December 1973), pp. 220-1227.

Liftik, Dr. Joseph, Alcoholism Division, Boston City Hospital, 818 Harrison Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02118. Dr. Liftik served as one of the trainers of the NYAP-NIAAA alcohol counselors.

Treanor, W. and van Houten, T. *op cit.*

4. *National Statistical Survey on Runaway Youth*, Part II, prepared under contract HEW 105-75-2105 for the Office of Youth Development by the Opinion Research Corporation, Princeton, N.J., 1976.

CHAPTER II

ADOLESCENT RUNNING AWAY: LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Overview

Leaving home during early or late adolescence has not always been considered a social problem. In fact, even the concept of adolescence was not developed until the 1900's. The first text to appear on the subject was by G.S. Hall. His work was entitled: "Adolescence: Its Psychology, and Its Relation To Physiology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education."[1] Hall's text appeared in America about a decade after child psychology started in Germany during 1882. The 1930 *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* defines adolescence as "the period of human development from the beginning of puberty to the end of the maturation process . . . Its chronological boundaries vary with race, climate, nutrition, social status and inheritance and may include some individuals as young as eight and as old as twenty-five".[2]

In the early days of the United States, youth were an integral part of the work force, and at an early age had an opportunity to achieve a personal feeling of autonomy and competence. In "A Brief History of the Runaway and the Institutional Response, 1850-1974", prepared by NYAP for the Office of Youth Development[3], NYAP states that:

> "The economic opportunities for adolescents diminished rapidly following the Civil War . . . The completion of the trans-continental railroad, the end of the frontier, and the continuing mechanization of rural and urban industries contributed to a growing labor surplus. Periodic and severe economic recessions between 1870 and 1900 diminished the resiliency of the labor force, and in the process, partially removed the place children had in the economic system, and created in many instances sheer boredom for youth. It seems that the base level of juvenile delinquency, including homelessness, either by choice or abandonment rose during this period".

American cities were increasingly faced with growing numbers of young roughs and vagabonds whose behavior needed to be controlled and discouraged[4]. One response to this growing concern with juvenile crime and indigency was the creation of the first juvenile court in Cook County, Illinois, 1899. The NYAP report continues:

> "The Depression of the late 20's and early 30's further emphasized the economic plight of American Youth. Urban families were working class people with immigrant roots, and the economic stress of this historical period pushed large numbers of people into a mobile zig-zag across the nation looking for work. These numbers included children. So severe

> was the problem, that from 1933 to 1935, the federal government created the Federal Transient Service to aid in the social service efforts for the massive numbers of people on the move."[5]

Although youth flight was explained primarily in economic terms, there was a growing tendency in the 1920's to look for pathology and use psychoanalytic approaches as the key to treat deviant youth.

The usual approach, however, in light of the labor surplus, were the detention of youth in federal youth camps; the return home arranged through local welfare departments; the enforcement of child labor and compulsory education laws. The adolescent had effectively been removed from the economic structure.

By the middle of World War II, the economy had begun to mend and running in search of employment was on the downswing. The late 40's and 50's brought America an increase in prosperity, in middle class values, in educational pressures; and a corresponding decrease in the traditionally extended family. Running away became a status offense, the act of a juvenile delinquent, the result of family breakdown or negative character development.

The expanded social consciousness and counterculture of the sixties brought a new runaway to the scene: the so-called flower child in search of an alternative lifestyle and escape from the boredom and plastic sterility of the suburbs.[6] A new haven for these runaways was the suburban shopping mall and the large college campus where the atmosphere was less hostile and alien to the new youth culture. Other time honored attractions for the runaway were the Strip in Atlanta, Georgetown and Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., Harvard Square in Boston, Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco . . .

A decade later, runaways were no longer viewed as exclusively middle-class flower children (it is doubtful that they ever fit that definition!) Professor Henry Miller of the University of California confirms this view. He says these youngsters are:

> "Left from life . . . They are not the children of affluence . . They are often the children of blue collar workers. Many have dropped out of high school and have less education than their parents. Many are from broken homes. They have few marketable skills and have already experienced so much failure they are benumbed. They are afraid to have aspirations. The difference between them and the flower children is that these children had homes to which to retreat no matter how strained their relationship with their parents. The new generation of street children has no safety net . . . The depression is back for these young people. It is a depression like the 1930's but it

> has affected only pockets of American Society and it's as serious for these as it was for the whole country in the 1930's."[7]

The Runaway Youth Act

In response to the growing reports on the unmet needs of runaway youth, the Runaway Youth Act, Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Bill, was signed by President Ford in late 1974. The Runaway Act is administered by the Office of Youth Development (DHEW), while other parts of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Bill are administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). Title III was assigned differently because it was argued that runaways should not be dealt with by the juvenile justice and law enforcement systems.

Although the Runaway Youth Act made money available to local units of government, a high priority was given to organizations which already operated a runaway center or otherwise worked with runaway youth. Most of the runaway centers participating in this project fit into this category. These runaway centers to a large extent had grown out of the counterculture movement, in response to the needs of runaways and street children.

Along with hotlines, free clinics, crisis intervention centers, these runaway centers were "alternatives" to the then existing social service system which was generally less accepting of the youth culture and less available and accessible to youth. Many of the innovations of the alternative youth social service movement have since been incorporated into the traditional social service system.

One factor in the growing cooperation between the "alternative" and "traditional" systems may well have been the funds made available by the Runaway Youth Act, and the concomitant eligibility requirements. These eligibility requirements briefly include: an easily accessible location to the runaway; a small client group (less than 20) with a ratio of counselors to runaways such that adequate treatment and counseling will be possible; an agreement to contact parents; an adequate reconciliation; and plans for the determination of the best placement if family reconciliation is not possible. Reports to the Secretary of HEW, including progress and statistical reports, became mandatory.[8]

The 1975 level of funding the RYA was $5 million, 1976 level was $8 million and 1977 level $10 million. The 1977 funding level partially funded 130 of the known 160 runaways centers across the country. In October of 1977 the Runaway Youth Act was reauthorized by Congress for an additional three years at a $25 million level for each of these years. However, the Congressional Appropriations Committee permitted only a $12 million funding level for fiscal

year 1978. Appropriation levels for fiscal years 1979 and 1980 are yet to be determined.[9]

Prevalence of Running Away in the Mid-70's

In increasingly large numbers, young people, adolescents and preadolescents, are running away from home. Their exact numbers are not known. A recent national statistical survey on runaway youth estimates that of youth aged 10 to 17, 1.7% (519,500 to 635,000) run away from home.[10] When these figures are adjusted for possible incorrect reporting by heads of households during the telephone screening process used by surveyors, the upper limit goes as far as 773,000 runaways annually.

Definition of Running Away

For the purpose of this study, a runaway is defined as a minor who leaves or attempts to leave his or her usual place of residence, be it his or her home or an institution, without consent of parent or guardian, or with parental permission, but as a result of parental indifference, abuse or neglect. The second part of the definition was included because of the large numbers of reported "throwaways" or unwanted adolescents: youth whose parents do not object to their leaving home, even though they have no place to go. Some of these youth run to, or end up at a runaway house. For purposes of this study, we are using the descriptive definition of a runaway program developed by NYAP for the Office of Youth Development (DHEW) in 1975.

> A runaway program is a twenty-four hour crisis intervention center with residential capabilities which is community based, geographically accessible, and has trained staff and volunteers who utilize their skills and community resources and linkages to provide a supportive protective environment and needed services to youth and their families who are experiencing crisis in problem identification and solution, and are seeking alternatives to their current situation.[11]

Who Runs Away?

Who runs away? The most recent and comprehensive statistical study was done by the Opinion Research Center in Princeton, New Jersey.[12] Although previous studies pointed to a 40-60 male/female runaway ratio, this study found that slightly more than half of the runaways are male (53.2 percent). The researchers point out that female runners are more likely to be reported as missing and they are also more likely to seek out social service agencies. Findings are based on interviews with 224 youth who had runaway and returned home and their parents; 202 youth who lived in the neighborhoods of these returned runaways and their parents; and 411 youth who were still on the run.

Runaways, especially non-returners, revealed a high degree of negative family dynamics, including parental alcohol abuse. Among serious runners and among runners who were abused at home, the study says parental alcoholism was the single most frequently mentioned difficulty.[13] Major differences in child rearing practices between parents of runaways and non-runaways dealt with the amount of assistance, comfort, communication and liking offered by the parents.

In exploring hypotheses regarding youth's relationship to school, community and the law, the following results were obtained:

—Academic expectations and aspirations of runaway youth were significantly lower than those of the youth who did not run;
—Non-returners felt they were most excluded by peers in the school situation;
—Runaways tended to be less active in youth organizations;
—Runaways were more likely to have been found delinquent before they ran.

Most runaways were gone less than one week, traveling less than ten miles from home. Returned runaways were more likely to have been accompanied by someone else when they left home. Returners did not usually feel that Hotline or Runaway House personnel were instrumental in their decision to return. The researchers point out that it was not that the agencies failed to provide this service, but rather that they made contact with too few of the runaways out there at any given time.

In comparing psycho-social characteristics of runaways, non-runaways, and their parents, findings included the following:

—Non-returners were more fate-directed and other-directed than returned runaways and comparison youth;
—Comparison youth had a better self image;
—Parents of runaways, especially mothers, were more likely to feel they were failures;
—Those non-returners who said they felt that their parents really wanted them to leave (the so-called "throwaways") were most likely to have been delinquent before running. This group was also more likely to give physical abuse as their reason for running.

Why Do Youth Run?

Why do youth run? Research, until recently provided few insights and many unanswered questions. In 1967, Robert Shellow and a group of investigators from the National Institute of Mental Health conducted an exhaustive review of the literature. They discerned that the results of studies and the conclusions drawn from them, up to that time, tended to draw two different pictures of the adolescent runaway.[14]

The first picture of the runaway was drawn by psychiatric workers associated with juvenile clinics (court and child guidance) who tended to report that the adolescent runaway was delinquent and manifested severe psychopathology. A number of studies support this general view.[15] The second picture stressed social and economic conditions of running away, and even gave some indication that running away may have been a positive and functional reaction to an intolerable situation. Studies upon which this picture is based concluded that runaways are not necessarily pathological or young individuals running away from pathological family situations.[16] The divergent findings appear to be related to the source of the samples of runaways, to research and instrument bias, and to incorrect interpretation of statistical correlations. As the ORC researchers point out, "the importance of psychopathological factors in runaway behavior has been studied largely through correlational analyses and the use of the *ex post facto* techniques."[17] It should be remembered a correlation only establishes relationship not causality. Even in instances of *strong* positive correlations (approaching unity, for instance) the researcher cannot be justified in assuming that one variable causes covariation in another. Thus, for example, a low self-image might not necessarily cause a youth to run away. Actually, it may be rejection on the part of the parent or parents which is responsible for both the low self-image and the runaway behavior.

The personality of the runaway has been the subject of many studies. Unfortunately, the children were usually the "captive" audience of juvenile institutions, not the runaway running from the home situation. In so far as references can be drawn from this population to the runaway population at large, the runaway is more poorly adjusted than his peers in the following traits: social capacity, formation of stable relationships, solitariness and withdrawal.[19]

The most recent and comprehensive studies regarding runaways were published by the Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation of Boulder, Colorado, for the Office of Youth Development. These studies were: ***A Study of Issues Relating to Runaway Behavior*** **and *The Incidence and Nature of Runaway Behavior.*[20, 21]**

This latter report is an interesting and significant piece of research. Its purpose was twofold: (1) to determine the feasibility of using a survey approach to estimate the incidence of runaway behavior using both a probability and a purposive sample, (2) the development of an integrated explanatory model of runaway behavior based on a thorough review of the literature and on data collected on the feasibility survey. The national statistical survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation was in fact a continuation of the BREC feasibility study and typology.

In developing their explanatory model, BREC examined runaway behavior in terms of the three social domains which constitute most of a youth's life experience . . . home, peer and school; and in terms of reinforcement delivery techniques (including negative labeling) used to strengthen certain behaviors and extinguish others; and in terms of the personal characteristics and attitudes of the youth involved.

This explanatory typology was based on two major classes: runaways precipitated by structural strains, and by personal strains. The resultant classification showed: delinquent runners; "running from" versus "running to" runners; and a minor group of the irrational psychopathological runners.

The BREC study stresses that runaways are not a homogeneous group - in fact, they appear to be quite as heterogeneous on many dimensions as any other youth. For example, the statistically significant finding that runaway youth exhibit more delinquent behavior than non-runaway youth is a gross generalization based on the mean or central tendency of the runaway sample. One of the variables on which these comparisons were made was "parent characteristics" - including a life events scale. Based on ANOVA analyses there was a significant difference at the .01 level between the parents of the purposive sample runners, (N = 139, score 16.9), the non-runners (N = 312, score 15.0) and the probability sample runners (N = 44, score 15.6).[22]

Part III of the Opinion Research Survey of runaway youth will deal in depth with the etiology of running away and will attempt to develop a system of classification for runaway youth. This will be based in part on the preliminary studies conducted by Tim Brennan and his associates for the Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation.

Another study on runaways, now in progress, is being conducted by Education Systems Corporation for the Office of Youth Development (DHEW). The Study is titled: "Development of a Typology on the Identification of Service Needs of Runaway Youth Unable or Unwilling to Return to Their Family Setting." ESC will use some of the same psychological variables as BREC: self-esteem, locus of control, family dynamics; as well as some of the life stress items developed in this study.[23] They will interview families of runaways, and social service workers at 15 sites throughout the country.

One study which strongly influenced this present research project was conducted by Dr. Margaret Beyer in a May 1974 doctoral dissertation,[24] *Psychological Problems of Adolescent Runaways*. Her study compares thirty-two pairs of adolescent runaways and their siblings. She found that the runaways:

a. were more depressed, had lower self-esteem (especially in home and school dimensions);

b. reported more stressful life events which have been linked to adult depression and psychiatric hospitalization;

c. had more conflict with their parents and felt more rejection and hostile control - especially from their fathers and step-fathers.

The study concluded that the interaction and combination of interpersonal family and school factors seemed to precipitate running away from home.

Runaway Behavior and Alcohol Use

A runaway and alcohol conference held in New Orleans in 1974, funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and coordinated by the National Youth Alternatives Project, addressed itself to the needs of runaway centers to have the skills necessary to recognize and work with the problem of alcohol-affected youth. There was a great deal of evidence to show that runaways from alcoholic families pass through runaway centers, thus indicating that traditional agencies were not successful in dealing with the problem. The conference attempted to deal with different treatment and referral approaches to alcohol abuse and alcoholism among runaways and their families with special emphasis on incorporating these methods into staff training and existing counseling services.

The conference concluded (with respect to incidence of runaways and alcohol abuse among youth) that since 1968, the incidence of both running away and alcohol abuse among youth appeared to have risen sharply.[25]

In the literature and in various studies on runaway youth, no significant information has been revealed with respect to the runaways and the use/abuse of alcohol. Only the study done by Margaret Saltonstall[26] with the Massachusetts Committee on Children and Youth comes close to dealing with alcohol and drugs. She states that many runaways are to be found in the group of adolescents who are testing the use of alcohol and a combination of alcohol and drugs. The children in this runaway series were extremely reticent to divulge information concerning the type and quantity of drugs or alcohol they ingested. Some flatly refused to discuss it. Some who were completely "stoned" denied any use of it. Of 135 runaways, 44 indicated the drug of their choice to be marijuana, 42 chose barbiturates, 38 chose speed, and 28 chose alcohol. Additional preferences cited were LSD, heroin, amphetamines and morphine.

Forty-seven of those youth, 34.8% of the 135 acknowledged drug users, were reported to be multi-habituated.

The Institute for Scientific Analysis in Los Angeles, California, is conducting a study on runaways to explore their mobility patterns and to isolate those factors which contribute to the prevelance of running away. Their findings indicated that alcoholism, sexual abuse (incest) and physical abuse (violence) are all stated reasons for a youth's flight from home. They do not appear to be independent phenomena in that drinking in the home is directly correlated with physical and sexual abuse.[27]

In a related longitudinal study of runaways, they explore in greater depth alcohol use by runaway youth. This study is based on a sample of runaway children selected from previous samples of children whose homes were generally characterized as lower-class multi-problem families in the East Bay Region of California. The experimental purposive sample consists of all individuals who were known in official records or who acknowledged in personal interviews to have left home without permission for more than twenty-four hours before the age eighteen. Information was systematically collected for the past 18 years.

Preliminary findings indicate that people who run away as minors reported more heavy drinking and greater use of illegal drugs today than non-runaways. Former runaways are also more frequently clinically diagnosed as dependent upon either alcohol or drugs. Specifically, almost twice as many runaways (44.77 percent) as non-runaways (26.7 percent) report serious problems with alcohol although a similar number of subjects in each sample have no difficulty with alcohol. With respect to the clinical diagnosis of alcoholism, former runaways are much more likely to be severe alcoholics than non-runaways...seven times more likely.

A 1974 survey of "alternative" community based programs in Oregon emphasized drug and alcohol programs.[28] They found significant alcohol and other substance abuse problems in both rural and urban economically depressed areas. Youth emerged as a major concern. Runaways particularly emerged as a population group at risk and in need of services.

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CHAPTER III

DEFINITION OF ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE: CONSTRUCTION OF THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM INDEX (API)

This chapter first reviews existing definitions of adolescent alcohol abuse, explaining the rationale for our development of the Alcohol Problem Index. Next, it summarizes the statistical procedures used in constructing the API and discuss its statistical validity and reliability.

Literature Review

There seems to be a proliferation of terms describing alcoholism in youth, including "problem drinkers," "excessive drinkers," "pathological drinkers;" all of which describe a similar phenomenon.

According to some criteria, any drinking by an adolescent is illegal and can, therefore, be defined as a problem. On the other hand, based on a problem drinking criterion of getting "high" or "tight" at least once a week, estimates from a 1974 NIAAA survey[1] indicate that approximately five percent of the students are problem drinkers. By a less conservative criterion of getting drunk four or more times a year, approximately 23 percent of the students exhibited potential problem drinking signs.

Other studies stress the early onset of drinking behavior. Glatt sees the differences between drinking patterns of normal adolescents and those who become dependent at an early age as being the fact that "normals" do not drink for "kicks," they drink as an aid to social acceptance.[2] However, among young alcoholics, there is definite evidence that the alcohol is used at a very early age for the effect it gives. He has developed a "typology" in which he outlines characteristics of young alcoholics. Among these characteristics are that he/she is emotionally much more disturbed than the hypothetical average adult; is insecure, not infrequently deprived, and started drinking to reduce anxiety, tension, feelings of inadequacy; and showed certain psychopathic characteristics quite apart from his/her drinking behavior (whereas, in most of the older alcoholics, long, continued heavy drinking over many years lead to personality deterioration and possible antisocial behavior). In the younger group, personality maladjustments often preceded, and may have contributed greatly, to excessive drinking.

A recent New York study confirmed this association of problem drinking and early drinking. This study, "Emerging Trends of Alcohol Use and Abuse Among Early Teenagers," was conducted jointly by the Hunter College School of Health Sciences, the New York City Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services Bureau of Alcoholism, and the New York City Board of Education. Trends identified were based on the response of the New York

City high school juniors and seniors who participated in the study. The population excluded school dropouts, students below 11th grade, and adolescents who are institutionalized.[3]

Of those males and females who reported that they drink (80 & 75 percent respectively), 60 percent reported being drunk once, and 33 percent reported being drunk three times or more in the past year. The survey identifies approximately 12 percent of drinkers as exhibiting a disturbing syndrome of frequency, quantity and effect. The total syndrome, which is considered to be alcoholism when found in adults, includes: (1) drinking more than once a week (11 percent); (2) drinking five or more units of specific alcohol beverages at a time (12.6 percent beer, 12.4 percent wine and 10.2 percent hard liquor); (3) blackouts or passing out (8 percent); (4) been in trouble due to drinking (5 percent - 3 or more times in the past year); (5) always or sometimes drinking more than their friends (12 percent); (6) drinking in order to get drunk (12 percent); and (7) drinking before or during school.

It is clear from the above examples, that the formulation of an operational definition to accurately measure individual or aggregate abuse is an inherent problem in any research effort regarding adolescent alcohol abuse. That the problem has been investigated from medical, legal, sociological and psychological view points, each emphasizing different factors, has added to the problem. Each field has provided evidence for many varying factors which influence alcohol abuse. The result is that the development of a tool to precisely define what alcohol abuse is has been controversial. Added to the controversy are the distinctions between alcohol abuse and alcoholism, between youth abuse and adult abuse.

The problems encountered in defining this phenomenon have been summarized by Bacon[4] following a workshop at the 1976 Annual Conference of the National Council of Alcoholism. From this workshop, three main problems encountered in defining youth alcohol abuse surfaced. The first is the question of age — what are the ages of the adolescent? The second problem encountered is defining what adolescent drinking actually is, and finally the definition of problem drinking. These questions are, of course, the core of any definition or problem drinking.

Alcohol abuse has historically been an adult problem and has only recently been studied in adolescents. We reviewed factors which led to assessing adult alcohol abuse in order to determine the impact these studies have had on answering the above questions and on assessing adolescent alcohol abuse.

Adult Alcohol Abuse

In studies delineating factors associated with adult alcohol abuse, interference caused by drinking is the main indicator of abuse. One such study, utilizing factor analysis, found that the most common item associated with problem drinking loaded on one factor. These items included: 1) feeling that one drinks too much; 2) family objects to drinking; 3) being arrested for drinking or disturbing the peace; and 4) having been in fights after drinking. These data show that disturbances in control and the general disruption of normal patterns of living can indicate a drinking problem.

This hypothesis was further supported by Pokorney et al[5] in their study to define and classify alcoholism into various categories based on reported behavior. These researchers conducted a factor analysis on responses obtained from their questionnaires, and found that the most significant loading occurred on the factor they labeled "loss of control".

Items in this factor (although they supported the predictor "feeling one's drinking is a problem" of the above mentioned study) indicated that "loss of control in routine daily behavior'" was an even stronger predictor of alcohol abuse.

Significant statements reported by subjects in their study included experiencing blackouts, drinking before a task, drinking for the effect, and tossing down and sneaking drinks.

Callahan and Roon[6] also hypothesized that problem drinking could be assessed by the amount of interference it caused in everyday living. They too found the number of problems caused by drinking was a valid indication of alcohol abuse. Consistent with the previous studies, concern felt about one's own drinking problem, as well as the concern of spouses, neighbors and fellow employees were found to be valid indicators. Also included was a loss of control factor, consisting of such variables as frequent intoxication, binges, sneaking drinks, problems with the law and belligerence. Other personal probelms such as health and financial problems were found to be valid indicators.

These studies, then, clearly point to the negative impact of alcohol abuse on adults in their ability to function adequately. But what of the adolescent?

Adolescent Alcohol Abuse

Referring to the question stated earlier, one notes that the assessment of teenage alcohol abuse is not as precise as that of adults. Certainly the young age at which youth drink is in and of itself a legal problem. As one youth worker stated: "any youth drinking is a problem, since by definition, it is illegal." Youth drinking is not always seen as problematic, many parents condone youth's drinking, if only as the lesser evil between drugs and alcohol. This statement does, however, point to the controversy over adolescent alcohol use and abuse.

Bacon asked what *ages* define "youth," what is youthful drinking, what is problem drinking?

Age

Recent studies have indicated the age limits we used in our study. Most notable is the longitudinal study conducted in San Mateo County, California.[7] This study, to be discussed more fully, found that while a few youth did begin drinking before age thirteen, this age was predominantly the point at which youth start drinking. Other research[8, 9] and our exploratory 1974-75 study support this trend. Because many states have now adopted laws setting the drinking age at eighteen. For purposes of a study on youth drinking, the age of adolescence therefore, can be stated to lie between the ages of thirteen and eighteen.

What is drinking?

The second and third problems stated by Bacon, to define drinking and problem drinking, can be hypothesized to lie on a continuum analagous to the adult drinking pattern ranging from social drinking to alcoholism.

Youth drinking has been placed on a similar continuum by researchers of adolescent behavior. The frequency-quantity index seems to be the most salient since many youth drink frequently but small amounts of alcohol, while others drink less frequently, but they drink larger quantities. following the classification used by Mulford and Miller, [10] Rachel *et al* employed the model used in their 1975 study.[11] The classifications devised were: abstainers - those who don't drink or drink less than once a year; infrequent drinkers - those drinking once a month at most and drinking small amounts per daily session; light drinkers - those drinking once a month at most and medium amounts of alcohol per session, or no more than three - four times a month and small amounts per session; moderate drinkers - those who drink at least once a week and drink small amounts, or three-four times a month and medium amounts or no more than once a month and large amounts per session; moderate/heavy drinkers - those who drink once a week or more and medium amounts of alcohol, or three-four times a month and large amounts of alcohol; and finally heavy drinkers - those who drink at least once a week and large amounts of alcohol per session. Furthermore, small amounts were defined as 1.6 oz.; medium as 1.6 - 2.88 oz.; and large amounts over 2.88 oz. of alcohol.

The San Mateo study employed a similar classification system but considered only the frequency of alcohol consumption.[12] The categories included were those youth who never drank, or drank less than ten times a year; those who drank 10 - 50 times and those who drank over 50 times a year. Those categories proved useful. A parallel can be drawn between these categories as well as others used in adolescent research.

Those who never or very rarely drink (even if they have on occasion used alcohol) cannot be termed, nor do they see themselves, as regular drinkers. Those, however, who have a pattern to their drinking, the light to heavy drinkers, can be classified, and do see themselves as "regular drinkers." One could state the second part of the definition of adolescent drinking as a youth who sees himself as a regular drinker or who shows and perceives a pattern to occasions.

Problem drinking

The third and most crucial component of the definition, the classification of problem drinking, has received much attention. One problem in this area has been the failure of researchers to shift emphasis to the adolescent's cultural milieu. By definition, youth drinking is a risk situation and, as such, calls for a different set of circumstances for drinking behavior.

Researchers who examined youth drinking from the perspective of the youth's "setting" found parallels between the effect of drinking in adult and youth drinking behavior. Wechsler and Thum[13] found that youth who drink were also involved in more delinquent activities such as trouble with school and/or police, shoplifting, and fighting. Similarly, Marden and Kolodner[14] found that those youth who reported being drunk four or more times in the past year had a greater incidence of two or more negative consequences (e.g. - trouble with school authorities, the law, parents, accidents, etc.). These relationships are, however, only correlational and reflect no cause/effect sequence. It's been shown and generally accepted that youth who engage in one sort of negative behavior also do so in other areas.

The first year NYAP study found a causal relationship between drinking and negative consequences. Youth who recognized themselves as having an alcohol problem or drinking heavily reported negative consequences as a result of drinking. It seems that assessing the impact of alcohol on the interference with an adolescent's life, within a youth's context, provides a meaningful evaluation of problem drinking.

The youth's context or cultural milieu defines not only negative effects of drinking but also determines culturally or socially acceptable settings for drinking. For instance, drinking before school is inappropriate while drinking at parties is not.

A third factor is indication of psychological dependence using alcohol to avoid the unpleasant or enhance the pleasant. It appears that youth alcohol abuse is defined through the effects, causes and circumstances of drinking.

Alcohol Abuse Definition Used During First Year Of Project

During the first year, NYAP developed an alcohol use survey instrument directed at runaway youth. It consisted of 57 items, covering:

1. Demographic data (age, race, sex, etc.)
2. Questions based on known typology of running away behavior (frequency of running, reasons for running, etc.)
3. **Questions relating to known psycho-social** correlates of adolescent alcohol abuse (parental alcohol use and attitude, peer use, effects of drinking, reasons for drinking, frequency and quantity)
4. Questions regarding poly-drug use.

In preparing the statistical design to analyze this data, it became clear that an operational definition of alcohol abuse had to be developed.

During that first year, NYAP asked Dr. Joseph Liftik of the Alcoholism Division at Boston City Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, to weigh each item for indicativeness of alcohol abuse. The tentative scoring system constituted the first step in the development of the Alcohol Problem Index (API). It was based on alcohol abuse indication ratings assigned to the alcohol questions in the survey. (See Table III-1) For instance, being arrested as a result of drinking rated two points. Two or more blackouts rated three points. The highest possible score based on twenty-five items was 41. A score of less than 4 points was not considered a problem score. Of the 482 runaways interviewed during that first year, 62 percent had a score greater than 4. The mean score was 9.

Since the score development during that first year was exploratory, it did not undergo any rigorous validity or reliability testing. An examination of the correlation matrix produced by these 25 variables showed significant intercorrelations.

Based on these findings, it was decided to develop a statistically reliable and valid Alcohol Problem Index (API), using the Thurstone method of scale construction assigning a score to each item indicating the degree of potential alcohol abuse associated with that variable.

TABLE III - 1

ORIGINAL RUNAWAY ALCOHOL PROBLEM SCORE
(NATIONAL YOUTH ALTERNATIVES PROJECT 1974 - 1975)

	ITEM	SCORE
1.	If drug and/or alcohol problem caused flight	2
2.	If youth drinks whenever he/she gets a chance	1
3.	If he/she drinks when sad	1
4.	If he/she drinks when nervous or worried	1
5.	If youth at times drinks when alone	1
6.	If youth drinks more than peers	1
7.	If youth has been arrested as a result of drinking	2
8.	If mother thinks youth drinks less than he/she actually does	1
9.	If father thinks youth drinks less than he/she actually does	1
10.	If mother complains about youth's drinking	1
11.	If father complains about youth's drinking	1
12.	If youth reports drinking beer daily	1
13.	If youth reports drinking wine daily	1
14.	If youth reports drinking liquor daily	1
15.	If youth reports drinking more than 4 glasses of beer at one sitting	2
16.	If youth reports drinking more than 7 glasses of beer at one sitting	3
17.	If youth reports drinking more than 4 glasses of wine at one sitting	2
18.	If youth reports drinking more than 7 glasses of wine at one sitting	3
19.	If youth reports drinking more than 4 glasses of liquor at one sitting	2
20.	If youth reports drinking more than 7 glasses of liquor at one sitting	3
21.	If youth combines drugs and alcohol	2
22.	If youth has had one blackout	2
23.	If youth has had more than one blackout	3
24.	If youth has switched from predominant polydrug use to predominant alcohol use	2
25.	If youth has made that switch because he/she liked the high better	1

The highest possible score was 41.
The highest score obtained was 24.
A score of less than 4 was not counted as a problem score.

Construction of the API

At the end of the first year, the survey instrument was revised; deletions and additions were made to the alcohol items. These changes were based on input from counselors-field workers; "other" answers and comments added by the youth; a more detailed review of the literature; and first year research findings. Questions regarding attitudes towards own and significant other use were added following consultation with Dr. James Rooney and Sanford Schwartz[16] of the Boys Town Center at the Catholic University of America, who are conducting a survey on the attitudes of adolescents towards alcohol and drug use. From these questions the following items in Table III-2 were selected for scoring.

TABLE III - 2

ALCOHOL ITEMS SELECTED FOR SCORING

- Drinks at parties
- Drinks alone
- Drinks on special occasions
- Drinks almost every weekend
- Drinks before school/sometimes
- Drinks before school/often
- Drinks after school/sometimes
- Drinks after school/often
- Drinks during school/sometimes
- Drinks during school/often
- Drinks to get drunk
- Drinks when sad
- Drinks when nervous or worried
- Drinks when bored
- Drinks when angry
- Drinks to be accepted
- Drinks to be viewed as tough
- Drinks to show adults one's old enough
- Drinks more than friends
- Arrested as a result of drinking
- Drinking interferes with school work
- Blackout/once
- Blackout/more than once
- Loss of friends of same sex as a result of drinking
- Loss of friends of opposite sex as a result of drinking
- Loss of job as a result of drinking
- Drop-out of school as a result of drinking
- Accident after drinking
- Serious fight after drinking
- Major conflict with parents as a result of drinking
- Started drinking at age 11
- Started drinking at age 12
- Started drinking at age 13
- Started drinking at age 14
- Started drinking at age 15
- Started drinking at age 16
- Started drinking at age 17
- Drinks once a week or more
- Drinks daily
- Came before school authorities as a result of drinking
- Youth thinks he/she has drinking problem
- Perceived drinking problem at age 12
- Perceived drinking problem at age 13
- Perceived drinking problem at age 14
- Perceived drinking problem at age 15
- Perceived drinking problem at age 16
- Perceived drinking problem at age 17

The API items listed in Table III-2 were weighed for indicativeness of alcohol abuse by a panel of 15 trained youth workers and alcohol counselors at NYAP's Second Annual Alcohol Program Development Conference held in Nahant, Massachusetts in September, 1975. The counselors were asked to rate each alcohol use variable on a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate its potential as a predictor of alcohol abuse.

Experiential and academic backgrounds of these counselors ranged from street outreach work and a few years of college to clinical work and doctoral studies in psychology or social work. The majority of the counselors were college graduates in psychology or sociology with substantial on-the-job training. All were experienced youth workers.

This scoring process was followed by an examination of the median distribution of the assigned scores to determine whether or not any scores had an excessively large semi-interquartile range indicating major disagreement among the judges.

Table III-3 gives a list of the alcohol abuse items and the median of the scores assigned by this group of judges.

In no case did the Q or semi-interquartile range* exceed 1.0 meaning that there was high agreement among the judges regarding the assigned score values. No item was dropped because of lack of agreement. The mean median score was 3.7; the minimum .50; the maximum 4.96.

TABLE III - 3

LIST OF ALCOHOL VARIABLES:

MEDIAN SCORES (Q2) AND SEMI-INTERQUARTILE RANGE (Q)

API VARIABLES	Median Score	Semi-Inter quartile Range
If youth drinks at parties	.62	.31
If youth drinks alone	4.15	.39
If youth drinks on special occasions	.50	.25
If youth drinks on weekends	2.56	.50
If youth drinks frequently before school	4.92	.29
If youth drinks rarely before school	3.66	.48
If youth drinks frequently after school	4.11	.36
If youth drinks rarely after school	2.28	.45
If youth drinks frequently during school	4.92	.29
If youth drinks rarely during school	4.05	.37
If youth drinks to get drunk	4.82	.36
If youth drinks when sad	3.50	.73
If youth drinks when nervous or worried	3.50	.72
If youth drinks when bored	3.33	.62
If youth drinks when angry	3.21	.58
If youth drinks to be accepted by peers	3.81	.48
If youth drinks to be viewed as tough	2.91	.81
If youth drinks to impress adults	2.42	.77
If youth drinks more than peers	3.60	.65

---

*/ The quartile derivation equals $\frac{Q3 - Q1}{2}$ in which Q3 is the point of scale above which 1/4 of the cases fall and Q1 is the point of scale below which 1/4 of the cases fall. A Q value of 2 or 3 is high and could mean a random distribution of judgements.

If youth has been arrested after drinking	3.80	.65
If youth has experienced blackout once	3.00	.37
If youth has experienced blackout more than once	4.50	.60
If youth's drinking has interfered with school work	3.75	.44
If youth's drinking has caused loss of friend of same sex	4.11	.36
If youth's drinking has caused loss of friends of other sex	4.50	.62
Drinking has caused loss of job	4.31	.51
Drinking has caused to drop out of school	4.92	.29
Drinking has caused accident or injury	3.87	.81
Drinking has caused serious fight	4.17	.57
Drinking has caused conflict with parents	3.50	.50
Drinking has caused problem with school authorities	3.58	.62
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 11 or younger	4.90	.27
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 12	4.90	.29
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 13	4.90	.27
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 14	4.86	.32
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 15	4.16	.42
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 16	3.68	.51
Age at which youth started to drink regularly—age 17	3.19	.60
Youth thinks he/she has a drinking problem	4.00	.72
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—12 or younger	4.78	.69
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—13	4.69	.73
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—14	4.37	.70
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—15	4.37	.70
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—age 16	4.00	.46
Age at which youth thought he had a problem—age 17	4.00	.46
Youth drinks once a week or more	3.64	.63
Youth drinks once daily	4.92	.29

No item was dropped because of lack of agreement. The mean median score was 3.7; the minimum .50; the maximum 4.96.

It was decided to eliminate the two items with a median less than 1:

drinking on special occasins Q2 = .50
drinking at parties Q2 = .62

The judges agreed most on the potential alcohol abuse indicativeness of early drinking (Q = .268) and least on the alcohol abuse indicativeness of "drinking to be viewed as tough" and "being in an accident after drinking" (Q = .81). Both of these items were given fairly high median scores: 2.91 and 3.875 respectively.

Examination of the relationship between median and semi-interquartile range showed that the items with the 9 highest medians had the lowest semi-interquartile range (meaning the highest agreement among the judges regarding indication of potential alcohol abuse).

Final Version of the API

The next steps consisted of collapsing and recoding several variables. The variables, "frequency of beer, wine and/or liquor consumption" (daily, once a week, or more than once a week) is not mutually exclusive with the variable "drinking every weekend." These variables were therefore collapsed into one single frequency index.

Table III-4 presents final API variables and weights. The end result is an item Alcohol Problem Index. A copy of the API instrument can be found in Appendix A.

TABLE III - 4

FINAL API SCORING SYSTEM

		Variables		Weights
	Labels	Categories (if other than "yes")		Median Scores
1.	Drinking alone			4.15
2.	Drinking before school	a.	frequently	4.92
		b.	rarely	3.66
3.	Drinking after school	a.	frequently	4.11
		b.	rarely	2.28
4.	Drinking during school	a.	frequently	4.92
		b.	rarely	4.05
5.	Drinking to get drunk			4.82
6.	Drinking when sad			3.50
7.	Drinking when nervous or worried			3.50
8.	Drinking when bored			3.33
9.	Drinking when angry			3.21
10.	Drinking to be accepted by peers			3.81
11.	Drinking to be viewed as tough			2.91
12.	Drinking to impress adults			2.87
13.	Drinking more than peers			3.60

14.	Being arrested after drinking		3.80
15.	Experiencing blackouts	a. once	3.00
		b. more than once	4.50
16.	Drinking interferes with school school work		3.75
17.	Drinking has caused loss of friend of opposite sex		4.50
18.	Drinking has caused loss of friend of same sex		4.11
19.	Drinking has caused loss of job		4.31
20.	Drinking has caused youth to drop out of school		4.92
21.	Drinking has caused youth accident or injury		3.87
22.	Drinking has caused youth serious fights		4.17
23.	Drinking has caused conflict with parents		3.50
24.	Drinking has caused conflict with authorities		3.58
25.	Age at onset of drinking	a. 11 or younger	4.90
		b. 12	4.90
		c. 13	4.90
		d. 14	4.86
		e. 15	4.16
		f. 16	3.68
		g. 17	3.19
26.	Youth thinks s/he has a drinking problem		4.00
27.	Age at which youth first thought s/he had a drinking problem	a. 12 or younger	4.78
		b. 13	4.69
		c. 14	4.37
		d. 15	4.37
		e. 16	4.00
		f. 17	4.00
28.	Frequency of alcohol use	a. every weekend	2.56
		b. once a week or more (more than weekends only)	3.64
		c. daily	4.92

Validity and Reliability of the API

Following construction of the instrument, it was checked for validity and reliability. Face and content validity is the first consideration in checking validity. It is the most subjective and least scientific of the various approaches to validation. It asks whether items listed are representative of youth alcohol abuse.

Since the total *real* universe of youth alcohol abuse items is not known, it is not possible to draw a random sample of alcohol abuse items. We therefore judged the presumed representatives of the items by asking other competent "judges" to judge the content of each item.

Criterion validity compares the instrument with one or more criteria or external variables which measure the attribute being studies. It is also known as predictive validity since it refers primarily to how well it estimates a criterion variable, in this case alcohol abuse.

It was decided to ask a group of counselors to evaluate the alcohol abuse of a subsample of 85 respondents independent of the API assessment. The counselors' independent assessment was then correlated and compared with the API scores. The results show significant correlation between API scores and counselors' assessment of youth's drink-problem ($r = .66$, $p < .001$, $n = 85$).

The reliability of an instrument is an estimate of the extent to which it contains errors in measurement which vary from person to person during a single administration of the scale, or during repeated administration, provided that no real change occurred during the interval.

The alpha reliability co-efficient which measures internal consistency was appropriate. It was chosen because of its high degree of precision.

The API was administered to a sample of 900 youth (600 runaways and 300 non-runaways), the alpha coefficient for the 28 item API was .88701.

This alpha could be increased slightly by deleting two items. Deletion of "accident as a result of drinking" would increase the alpha coefficient from .88701 to .88751; deletion of "loss of job as a result of drinking" would increase it to .88763.

In neither case is the increase sufficient to warrant dropping the item. In addition, it is felt that both items are a function of the youth's age (median age in this sample is 15) and that in older populations, the deletion of these two items might not produce a higher reliability coefficient.

The same reliability test was run with a sample of 349 youth: 98 runaways from the original sample and 251 non-runaway high school students. The alpha-coefficient was .87759.

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CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY POPULATION

Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the 907 youth interviewed for the study. Six hundred eighteen of these were runaways interviewed in a runaway center. The others were high school students interviewed in a classroom setting.

The description presents frequency and distribution of demographic characteristics of running away and drinking behaviors. It indicates significant differences in frequency distribution among subgroups, emphasizing data on the runaway youth. This chapter serves as an introduction to Chapter VI which will examine predictors of alcohol abuse and looks at the relationship between running away and alcohol abuse. The descriptive data is based on frequency distributions, cross tabulations of nominal level variables, and bivariate correlations of interval level variables. The predictive data in the following chapters are based on a multivariate regression analysis.

The questionnaires were administered in an interview format to 618 runaways in seventeen nationally representative runaway centers by counselor/fieldworkers whom NYAP had trained in questionnaire administration. The fieldworkers main tasks were youth alcohol abuse data collection, youth alcohol abuse counseling and youth alcohol program development.

The 289 high school students were administered the questionnaire in a classroom setting by volunteer teachers who had received telephonic and written instructions regarding purpose and use of the questionnaires. These youth constituted a sample studied by NYAP's researcher for her doctoral dissertation at Catholic University. Because of the personal nature of some of questions, counselors were asked to incorporate the questionnaire into a counseling session; teachers were asked to plan some time following questionnaire administration to discuss feedback from students. Information reports from counselors and teachers indicate that in general, the youth were enthusiastic about participating in the study and appreciated the opportunity to talk or tell about themselves. Very few returned questionnaires had to be dropped because of 'nonsense' answers.

Table IV-1 lists the programs and the relative proportion of respondents. Six hundred acceptable returns were received from 17 participating runaway centers, during a six month data collection period, from January to June 1976. Within each program, the study sample was designed to be purposive and stratified. It was in fact, haphazard and accidental—a major limitation of the study.

TABLE IV - 1

PARTICIPATING RUNAWAY CENTERS AND NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS PER CENTER

State	City	Program	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
MA	Boston	Project Place	9	1.5%
MA	Boston	The Bridge	2	.3%
VT	Burlington	Spectrum	44	7.3%
NY	Buffalo	Compass House	20	3.3%
NY	Bronx	GLIE	21	3.5%
DC	Washington	Zocalo	30	5.0%
PA	Philadelphia	Voyage House	22	3.7%
FL	Tampa	Beach Place	52	8.7%
OH	Hamilton	Stay Center	56	9.3%
WI	Milwaukee	Pathfinders	83	13.8%
IA	Des Moines	Iowa Runaway Center	27	4.5%
CO	Denver	South-West Denver	28	4.7%
CA	San Diego	Project OZ	51	8.5%
CA	Berkeley	Berkeley Youth Alternatives	54	9.0%
OR	Portland	Contact Center	13	2.2%
AK	Anchorage	Youth Services	38	6.3%
LA	New Orleans	Greenhouse	50	8.3%
		Total		

General Demographic Data

It was found that many of the demographic factors included in this study obtained the same results as those found in the "Annual Report on Activities Conducted to Implement the Runaway Youth Act" by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.[1] Because of the similarity between these findings and, thus, the expanded generalizability of this report, the HEW variables which coincide with the NYAP study are included in this section. (See Table IV-3 A through E).

Sex

Of the runaways, over half were female, 59.8 percent; 40.2 percent were male, and, similarly, the non-runaway group was 61.1 percent female and 38.9 percent male.

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[1] Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. *Runaway Youth: Annual Report on Activities Conducted to Implement the Runaway Youth Act*, 1976.

Age

One-fourth of the runaways were 17 years old (25.5 percent); 24.6 percent were age 16; 21.5 percent age 14; 19.5 percent age 15; 7.1 percent were age 13; 1.8 percent were age 12 and one respondent was age 11.

The non-runaway sample was composed of older youth. More than 42 percent were age 17, 17.5 percent were 16 years old, 28 percent were age 14 and the 13 and 15 year olds comprised 12.5 percent of the group.

Race

Three-fourths of the runaways were White; 12.8 percent were Black; 4 percent were Hispanic; 1 percent were Oriental; 4 percent were Native Americans and 1 percent were classified as "other". Of the non-runaways, slightly less than three-fourths were White (73.9 percent); only 6.8 percent were Black; 5 percent were Hispanic; 2 percent were Oriental, 9.3 percent were Native American and 2.9 percent were "other". Table IV-2 lists runaway centers with more than 10 percent Black or Hispanic respondents.

TABLE IV-2

RUNAWAY CENTERS WITH MORE THAN 10 PERCENT BLACK AND/OR HISPANIC RESPONDENTS

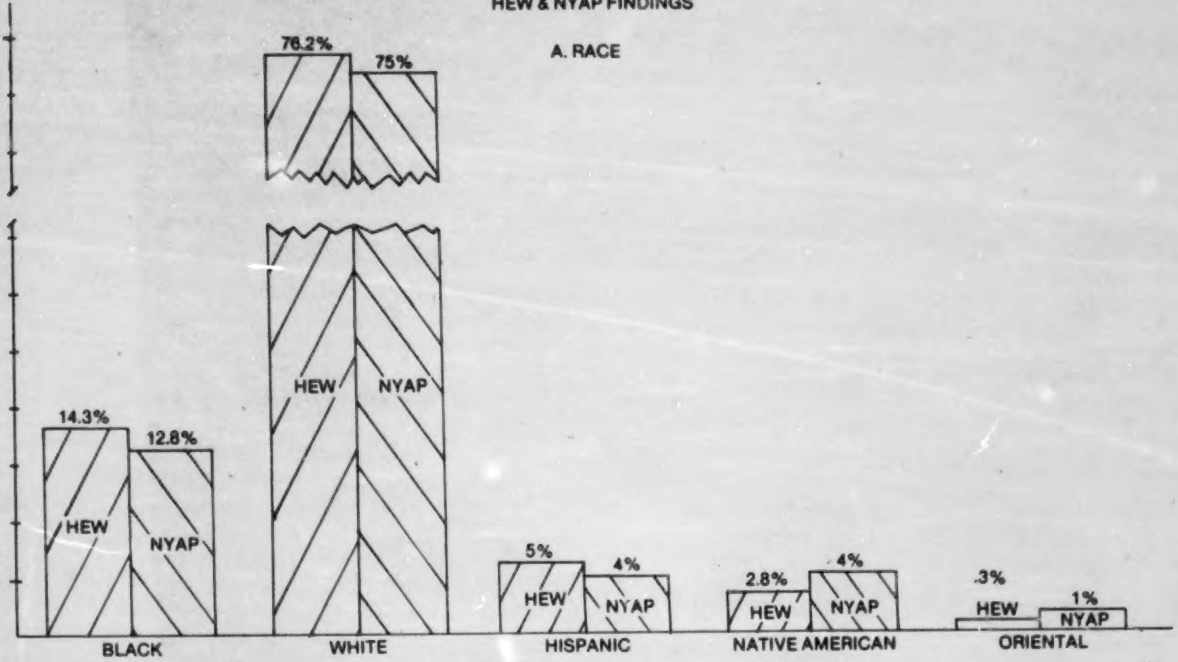
CENTER	CITY-STATE	*HISPANIC* Relative Frequency	*BLACK* Relative Frequency
GLIE	Bronx, New York	27.3%	12.5%
Zocalo	Washington, D.C.		12.5%
Pathfinders	Milwaukee, Wisc.	13.6%	11.5%
Youth Alternatives	Berkeley, CA	13.6%	18.8%
Greenhouse	New Orleans, LA		10.4%
SW Denver Runaway	Denver, CO	13.6%	

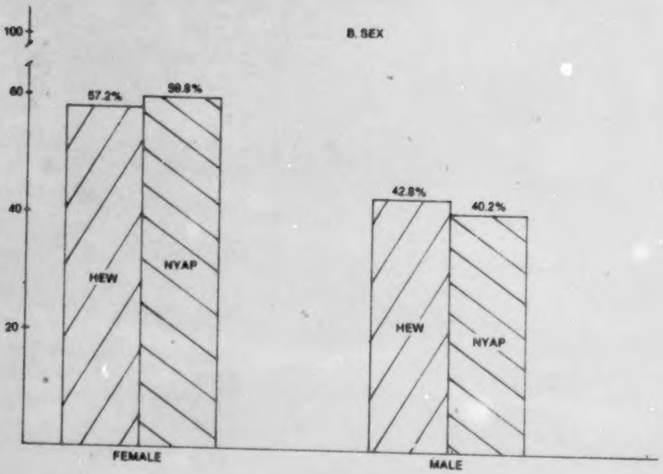
The male-female ratio and age distribution were fairly consistent among Blacks, Whites and Hispanics. Among White youth there were more younger males (9.2 percent of White males were 13 years compared to 5 percent of Black males); and more 17 year olds; (20.1 percent of White males to 15 percent of Black males), among Hispanic youth, too, there were fewer older males. For Black youth a breakdown by sex controlling for age was not significant ($p < .28$). It was however, significant for White youth ($p < .07$).

TABLE IV-3

COMPARISON BETWEEN HEW & NYAP FINDINGS

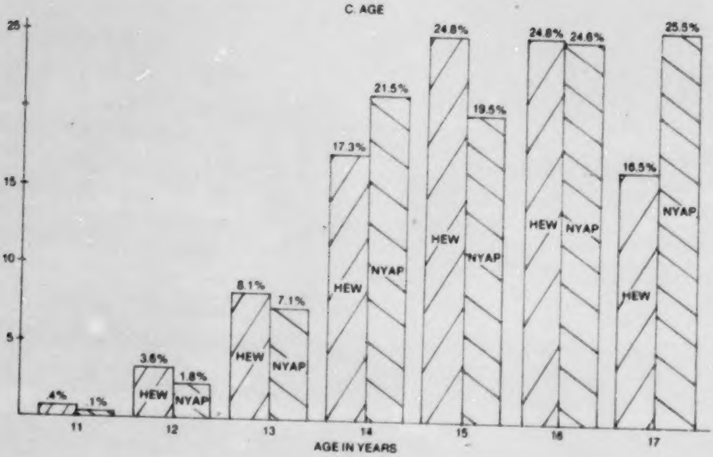
A. RACE





B. SEX

100
60
40
20
57.2%
59.8%
42.8%
40.2%
HEW
NYAP
HEW
NYAP
FEMALE
MALE



C. AGE

25
15
10
5
.4%
.1%
3.6%
1.8%
8.1%
7.1%
17.3%
21.5%
24.8%
19.5%
24.8%
24.6%
16.5%
25.5%
HEW
NYAP
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
AGE IN YEARS

Education

Over one-fourth completed grade 9; 14.8 percent completed grade 8; 14.4 percent completed grade 10; 10 percent completed grade 7; 9.8 percent completed grade 11. The rest, (5 percent) had completed grades 6, 5, and 4, respectively. Of the non-runaways, 40.4 percent had finished 9th grade; one percent had finished grade 10; 18 percent had completed grade 11; and 39.9 percent had finished grade 12. Of this sample, 1.4 percent was missing.

Of special note, are the two Bronx runaways who had never been in school and had been living on the street for years.

The majority of the runaways (51.7 percent) considered themselves average students; a near equal number considered themselves to be poor students (21.9 percent), and good students (22.6 percent). Only 3.9 percent viewed themselves as excellent students.

Approximately one out of four runaways had dropped out of school, 24 percent of 600 or 27.9 percent of the runaways who answered this question. Proportionately more Black male runaways (56.5 percent) than White male runaways were school dropouts. Conversely, more White female runaways (49.5 percent) than Black female runaways had dropped out of school.

Of the non-runaway population, less than half (46.3 percent) considered themselves good students; 42.8 percent thought they were average students and 9.1 percent thought they were excellent students compared to 3.9 percent of the runaways. The largest difference between the two groups was in the poor student category. Only 1.1 percent of the non-runaways thought they were poor students while 21.9 percent of the runaway sample described themselves as such.

The non-runaway population generally considered themselves better students, indicating less school failure than the runaway population.

Religion

Just over one-third (38.3 percent) were Protestant; 32.3 percent were Catholic; 1.9 percent were Jewish; 16.9 percent had no religion; 9 percent were classified as "other", and 1.7 percent were missing.

Description of religious atmosphere in the home ranged from 53.6 percent who said their families were not very religious; 31.8 percent who were mildly religious; to only 12.9 percent who said their families were very religious.

Forty and four-tenths percent (40.4 percent) of the non-runaways were Protestant; 30.9 percent were Catholic; 2.1 percent were Jewish and 14 percent had no religion. Among this group, 44.9 percent were not very religious; 41.1 percent were mildly religious and only 9.8 percent were very religious.

Among both groups, Protestant was the most common religion; Catholic next; then Jewish. Although the runaways showed a high percentage of "being not very religious", more runaways considered their families "very religious" than did non-runaways.

Density of Home Town

Over one-third came from urban areas; 22.7 percent were from suburban areas; 21.7 percent were from "small towns" and 16.5 percent from rural areas; 1.4 percent did not answer this question. The proportions changed significantly among the non-runaways: only 17.2 percent were from urban areas; 17.0 percent from suburban areas; nearly one-quarter (24.6 percent) from small towns and more than one-third [illegible]0.0 percent) were from rural areas. Almost three-fourths of the runaway sample were from urban or suburban areas compared to only about one-third of the non-runaways.

Almost half the runaways were city youth. One out of four lived in the suburbs (25.5 percent); one out of five (20.3 percent) lived in small towns. Only 5.2 percent came from rural areas.

Among Black and Hispanic runaways, the proportion of city youth was considerably higher: 86.2 percent of Blacks and 71.4 percent Hispanic youth compared to 39.3 percent White youth were from urban areas. While 30.9 percent of the White runaways lived in the suburbs, only 5.3 percent of the Hispanic youth were suburbanites ($p < 0.000$).

Siblings

Nearly one-quarter (21.3 percent) had two siblings; 19.1 percent had three siblings; and 15.9 percent had one. The percentages decreased as the number of siblings increased and less than 5 percent were only children. Thirty and two-tenths percent (30.2 percent) were first born, and again, the percentages decreased from second born to last born.

Of the non-runaways, about one-fourth had one sibling; the same had two siblings; 16.1 percent had three siblings. Only 3.2 percent were only children and the remainder (31.5 percent) had from 4 to 12 or more siblings. Of the high school students, just over one-fourth (26.3 percent) were first born; just a quarter were second born; 22.8 percent were third born and so on.

Only 4.8 percent of the runaways were an only child. A closer look at birth order in the runaway sample revealed some interesting patterns. Black youth were most likely to be in larger families (37.1 percent of Blacks and 16 percent of Whites came from familes with seven or more children). Blacks were also least likely to be in families of two or four children (34.3 percent of Blacks vs. 48.9 percent of Whites).

Family Composition

Less than one-third of the runaway respondents lived with both natural parents, while 19.5 percent lived with their mother only. Fifteen and eight tenths percent lived with mother and step-father; 6.1 percent lived with father and step-mother and only 2.6 percent lived with father only. The remainder lived in some other arrangement (group foster home, institution, etc.).

One half of the runaway respondents had been in their home situation at least 8 years. Three-hundred and twenty-two out of nine-hundred and seven responses were counted either as not applicable or missing. Less than 10 percent were in their home situation for only one month. Their remainder were spread from two months to 7½ years.

The majority responded that both their parents were alive, as well as that neither had deserted the family. Most answered that their parents had not been jailed, and of those that were, more fathers than mothers had been in jail (12.7 percent and 3.7 percent respectively), compared to 7.7 percent and 2.5 percent of the non-runaway parents. The majority of both parents had not been institutionalized, however, of those who were, more mothers than fathers were more likely to have been institutionalized.

Over a third of the parents were divorced (39 percent), while less than 20 percent were separated. "Other" family experiences amounted to less than 5 percent.

Over half of the high school students lived with both parents compared to one-third of the runaways. Seventeen and two-tenths percent lived with mothers alone, compared to the 19.5 percent of the runaways. Ten and five-tenths percent lived with mother and step-father and 5.6 percent lived with father and step-mother. Less then 2 percent lived with father only. Seven and four-tenths percent lived in some other arrangement. Of the non-runaways, only 2.8 percent said their mother died, and 7.4 percent said their father had died. Only 15 percent of the non-runaway parents were separated and 29.5 percent were divorced, much less when compared to 42 percent of the runaway sample.

The runaways were less likely to be living with both parents than were the non-runaways. Both groups showed a larger percentage living with mother only, than mother and stepfather. The same was true with father only and father and stepmother.

More parents were divorced among runaways than the non-runaway group showing less strong family structure, although separation occured as frequently in both groups.

In the runaway sample less than one-third of the respondents

(30.7 percent) lived with both natural parents. Only 16.8 percent of Black runaways lived with both natural parents as opposed to 33.3 percent of the White and 40.9 percent of the Hispanic runaways ($p<.002$). The proportion of runaways living with mother only was highest in urban and rural areas (25.5 percent and 22.6 percent, respectively) and lowest in small town (13.2 percent, $p<.0082$). twenty-one percent did not live in the family home. Of these, 75 or 12.5 percent of total, living in group foster homes. Twenty-three (3.8 percent) lived in an institutional setting, usually some form of long-term residential care.

Seventy-five youths (12.5 percent) indicated they had "other" living arrangements. Thirteen of these youth lived in foster families rather than group homes. Seven lived with friends. For at least 38, their last home had been in some sort of extended or reconstituted family, i.e. mother and boyfriend, grandparent, relatives, in-laws, siblings, etc.

It was found that more than one-third of the runaways had lived in this home less than three years (39.2 percent). Of these youth, 28 percent had lived in their last home situation twelve months or less, 11 percent had lived in their last home from twelve to thirty-six months. The rest of the runaways (61.2 percent) reported living in their present home over three years.

Family Breakdown in Runaway Sample

Death of mother had occurred in 6.6 percent of the families of runaways; death of father in 9.5 percent of the families. Death of both parents was rare. It occurred in 1.7 percent of the cases.

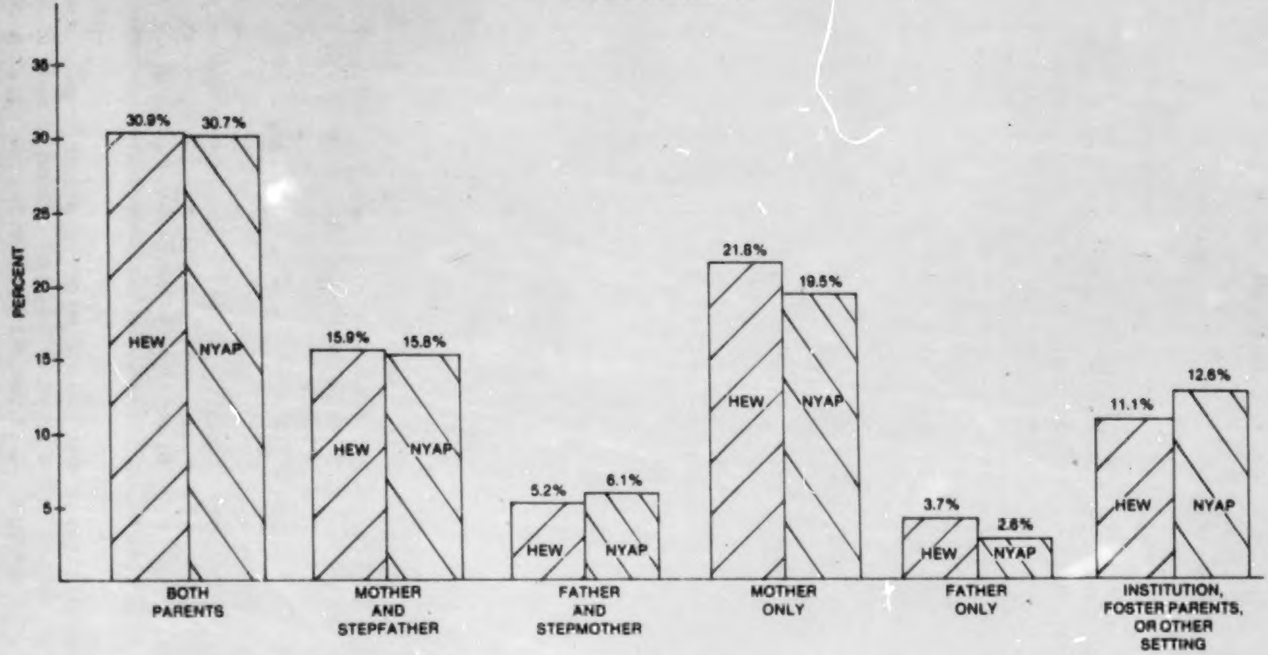
Death of the parent occurred proportionately more frequently when the runaway was one of the last born children in a large family. Death of mother had occurred more often to rural runaways (16.6 percent). Death of father occurred as frequently to rural runaways (12.9 percent) as to urban runaways (11.9 percent), less frequently to others.

In response to an open-end question regarding other family experiences, 4.2 percent of runaways checked this "other" category. The trend that emerged from these "other" responses was experience of the death of grandparents, siblings and friends.

Desertion by either parent of the runaway occurred with about the same frequency as death; 4.8 percent of mothers had deserted their families; 9.5 percent of the fathers. Only in 1.5 percent of the cases (nine runaways) had both parents deserted. Desertion by either parent occurred most frequently in Black urban families; least frequently in white rural or small town families.

Other parents of runaways had been separated from their children through incarceration or institutionalization. Four and six tenths

D. FAMILY COMPOSITION



percent of the mothers and 15.6 percent of the fathers had at one time or another been in jail. Five and four tenths percent of the mothers and 2.7 percent of the fathers had been or were in a mental hospital.

Divorce or separation were the rule not the exception. Forty-two and eight tenths percent of the parents of runaways were divorced, another 19.2 percent were separated. Separation was even more prevalent among parents of Black runaways (25 percent of Black runaways) than White runaways (8.6 percent, $p < 0.00$).

Divorce, on the other hand was more prevalent in white urban families ($p < 0.0002$). In fact, while occurring most frequently in families of city runaways, divorce occurred least frequently in Black families. Only one out of four Black runaways had divorced parents (23.5 percent of Blacks) compared to 54.4 percent of white runaways ($p < 0.000$).

Parents Occupation and Employment Status

A total of 17.1 percent of the responses to father's employment status was counted as not applicable or missing. Of the remainder, 65.9 percent worked full-time compared to 74 percent of the high school students, and 13 percent were unemployed, compared to 7.7 percent among non-runaway fathers. Eight and one tenth percent of the mother's employment status was counted not applicable or missing. Of the remainder, nearly half (41 percent), were unemployed; just over one-third (34.6 percent) worked full time and 14.6 percent worked part-time, a trend which also emerged in the non-runaway sample.

The largest percentage of mothers were skilled workers (22.3 percent). In both groups, 13.7 percent were clerical-sales women; 12.8 percent were professionals; 12.2 percent were unskilled workers, 10.3 percent were "other" (probably housewife?) and the rest went from retired to business women, etc.

The largest percentage of fathers of runaways, like mothers, were skilled workers (31.4 percent) with only 6.7 percent of the non-runaway fathers in this category. Thirteen and five tenths percent were classified as "clerical-sales"; 12.7 percent were professionals; 4.6 percent of the fathers were disabled or on welfare, compared to only 1.4 percent of the non runaway fathers. Four and six tenths percent of the fathers were unemployed, 8.2 percent of the runaway fathers were small business managers, and 7.4 percent were unskilled workers.

Runaway fathers were less likely to be employed full time than non-runaway fathers. Mother's employment status was similar for both groups. Among the runaways, fathers were mostly skilled laborers, while for the non-runaways most fathers were clerical and professional. More mothers of runaways were disabled or on welfare when compared to nonrunaway mothers.

Further analysis showed that, in the runaway sample, proportionately more fathers of Hispanic youth had part-time employment ($p<0.0044$) and more suburban fathers were employed full-time ($p<.0416$).

In urban and suburban areas, a somewhat smaller proportion of mothers of runaways were not working (43.7 percent) than in small towns and rural areas (59.1 percent).

For White runaways, there was significantly less unemployment of both parents in rural areas and small towns (6.4 percent) than in cities and suburbs (16.4 percent).

Nine and two-tenths percent of parents of runaways were both unemployed. In 2.7 percent of the cases, both parents were disabled or on welfare. Generally speaking, it was more likely for the mother to be disabled (10.5 percent) than the father (5 percent).

Over half of the fathers of runaways are described as skilled workers - proportionately more so in small town and rural areas (65.7 percent) than in cities or suburbs (45.7 percent; $p<.0009$). Nine percent of the fathers of runaways are unskilled, especially in the cities (16.7 percent). Ten percent are executives, usually suburbanites; 16 percent are professionals (somewhat higher proportion in the cities than in the rural areas). Twice as many White as Black fathers of runaways are professionals, (14.4 percent White; 6.4 percent Black). There are also fewer managers, executives and clerical workers among Black fathers; and slightly less skilled workers among Whites (49.6 percent) than among Black (59.6 percent) and Hispanic (60 percent). The greatest number of unskilled workers are Black (21.3 percent). Seven and four tenths percent of White fathers and 10 percent of Hispanic fathers are also described as unskilled workers.

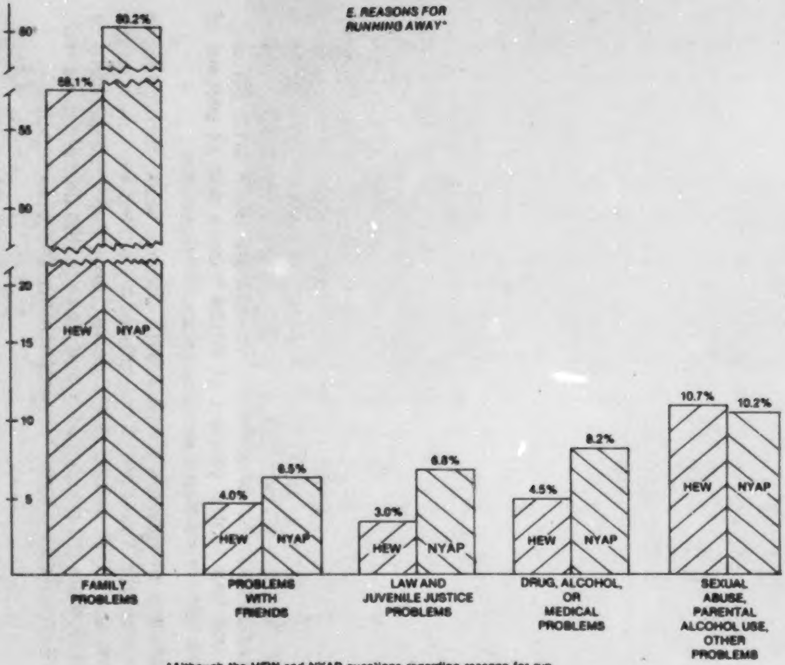
In families of runaways where both parents work, the following picture emerges. One-third of the fathers are skilled workers, and the mothers are either skilled (8.4 percent), unskilled (11.1 percent) or clerical workers (10 percent). Six and three tenths percent of parents are both unskilled workers; 7.9 percent are both professionals.

Characteristics of Running Away Behavior

Reasons For Running

Of those who ran away, the majority in both groups did so because of "family problems". The next largest reason for running were problems classified as "other". Parental alcohol abuse was the next important reason for running. Among runaways, sexual and legal concerns and problems with friends were less important and finally, medical problems as well as the youth's own alcohol abuse were least important factors for running away. Among those who had run-

E. REASONS FOR RUNNING AWAY*



*Although the HEW and NYAP questions regarding reasons for running away were worded differently, the categories were similar in content. The difference in responses is probably a factor of the differences in the wording of the questions.

away before, but were not currently runaways, 6.5 percent said they ran because of problems with a friend; 4.3 percent for sexual problems; 3.6 percent for parents alcohol abuse; 3.5 percent for legal reasons; 2.8 percent for personal alcohol problems; and 2.1 percent for medical reasons.

In the runaway sample, the overwhelming reason for running away was a family problem: 69 percent said it was the major reason; 11.2 percent listed it as a secondary problem.

Among White youth, girls were more likely to run for this reason; 74.8 percent of White females runaways listed the family as the primary cause for their running, versus 66.9 percent of White males ($p < .0214$). This difference according to sex did not appear among Black runaways ($p < .5202$).

The only youth who tended not to list family as a problem were those whose last home had not been in a family situation. Thirty-six and four tenths percent (36.4 percent) of the kids in institutions, foster homes and group homes did not mention the family.

Only 2.7 percent listed a medical problem as a major problem (2.7 percent as a contributing problem). Legal problems were the major cause for 2.9 percent (secondary for 3.9 percent) of the youth. For those few who cited legal problems, it was usually more severe for males than for females ($p < .0269$).

One and eight-tenths percent mentioned sex as a major cause. Four and eight tenths percent said it was a secondary problem. Overall, it was most likely to be a problem for White females (8.8 percent).

Girls too, were most likely to run because of parental alcohol abuse; 5.1 percent of the White girls checked it as the primary problem; 8.8 percent of White girls (2.2 percent of White males) checked it as a secondary problem.

Overall, a total of 12.5 percent (1 out of 8 respondents) listed parental alcohol abuse as a reason for running away from home: 4.9 percent as a major reason; 7.6 percent as a secondary reason. Seventy-three and eight tenths percent (73.8 percent) of fathers whose kids ran away because of parental alcohol abuse were frequently intoxicated. Proportionately more females (63.7 percent) than males (36.3 percent) reported that their fathers were heavy drinkers ($p < .0486$). "Personal" problems were cited by few (3.7 percent). Problems with friends were the major problem for 3.9 percent, (a secondary problem for 10.1 percent).

Seventeen and three tenths percent indicated they ran for "other" reasons. Of those who explained, four said they ran because of sexual abuse and seven because of problems in school. (Not significant in breakdown by sex: $p < .94$).

Clearly the question of the possibility of sexual abuse (probably related to parental alcohol abuse) is one which must be addressed in further studies.

Distance From Home

The overwhelming majority of the runaways were at a runaway center within their own community: 62.7 percent had run less than 10 miles; 21.5 percent between 11 and 50 miles. Only 15.8 percent said they were more than 50 miles away from home.

Repeat Runners

For nearly three-fourths of the runaway respondents, running away was not a one-time experience: 70.4 percent had run away before: 17.3 percent once, 24.8 percent two or three times, 28.3 percent more than four times.

Of the repeat runners, 60.2 percent were local kids as were 68.4 percent of first time runners ($p<.1708$). Apparently, frequency of runaway behavior is not related to distance run.

Previous Helping Experience

Fifteen and a half percent of repeat runners had previously received help at this same runaway center where they were now re-applying for support in the form of shelter and/or counseling. Seven and one tenth percent has been to another runaway program.

Several youth had received help from more than one place: another counseling center (16 percent); from the police (25.4 percent); from friends (53.2 percent). Yet nearly one out of five (18.1 percent) had not received any help from anyone.

Drinking Behavior

Alcohol Use

Over three-fourths of the respondents, 79.8 percent, said they occasionally drank some kind of alcohol and 60 percent of these youth said they drink regularly. These percentages did not differ between runaways and non-runaways.

Frequency of Drinking

When asked when they drank, 80 percent said they drank on special occasions, about one-fourth drank when alone and almost a third drank almost every weekend. There was little difference in frequency of drinking between runawys and non-runaways.

80	percent drink at parties
75	percent drink on special occasions
27.3	percent drink alone

30.5 percent drink almost every weekend
4.4 percent frequently drink before school
12.9 percent occasionally, albeit rarely, drink before school
5.1 percent frequently drink before school
11.7 percent rarely drink during school
19.9 percent rarely drink after school
10.4 percent frequently drink after school

To summarize: Over one-fourth of the runaways will drink when they are by themselves; nearly one-third drink almost every weekend; one out of ten frequently drink after school and occasionally before school.

Drinking Alone

Less than one-fourth of those who drank, both runaway and non-runaway, said they got drunk after drinking alone.

Age at Which Youth Started Drinking

Youth were asked at what age they started drinking regularly. Because of the use of the word "regularly", some youth who had answered the other drinking question stated that this question was not applicable. Based on the number of youth answering this question, it was determined that at least 60 percent of the runaways are regular drinkers, and the other 20 percent "occasional" drinkers.

Among runaways, 5.1 percent said they started drinking regularly at a very young age, (under age 10), some as young as pre-school. Fourteen and eight tenths percent (14.8 percent) started to drink regularly around the ages of 11 or 12; the majority (54 percent), between the ages of 13 and 15; and 7.6 percent began at age 16 or 17. Runaways started drinking significantly earlier than the non-runaways, who generally did not start until age 16 or 17. The graph following shows the age when runaways and non-runaways started drinking. (Table IV-4)

Age At Which Youth See Their Drinking As A Problem

The age at which the runaway youth see their drinking as a problem follows the same trend as the age at which they started drinking; though one year older. It seems as though those who do start drinking, do so heavily for at least a year and then see it as a problem.

Only about five percent of those who drank, in both groups, saw it as a problem, however, 13 percent of the runaways who drank saw it as a problem at one point compared to only 8.8 percent of the non-runaways. Of those who saw it as a problem, the non-runaways saw it as such at ages 15 to 17 more than the runaways. The runaways, however, reported seeing it as a problem more often at an earlier age. On the following page is a graph of the ages at which youth saw their drinking as a problem (Table IV-5).

TABLE IV - 4

AGE AT WHICH YOUTH STARTED DRINKING

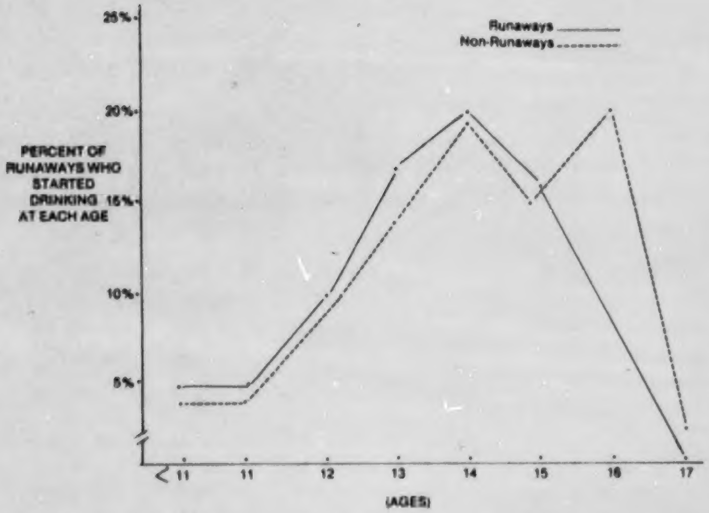
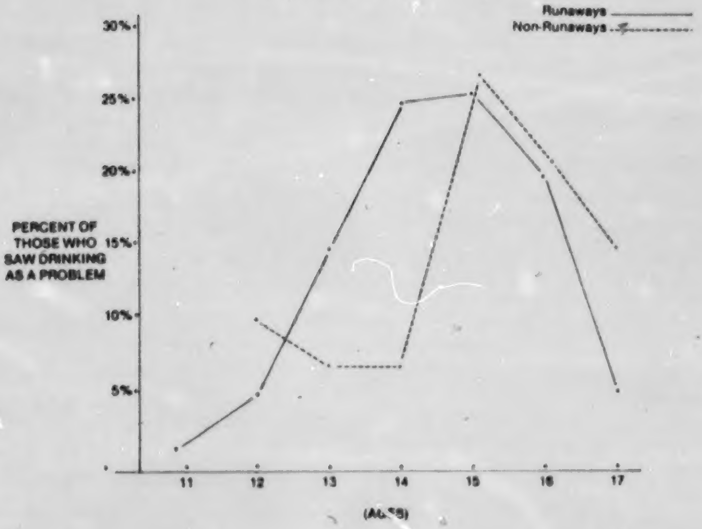


TABLE V - 5

AGE AT WHICH YOUTH SEE THEIR DRINKING AS A PROBLEM



Reason For Drinking

Responses to "why do you drink" were varied. Most popular reasons for drinking of the runaways were "when happy" (74.1 percent), compared to 50 percent of the non-runaways; "to get drunk" (45.9 percent), and "when angry or bored" (both 31 percent); 30 percent of the runaways drank "when nervous or worried" compared to 15 percent of the non-runaways; 29 percent drank "when sad"; 21.9 percent drank to be "accepted"; and only 7 percent drank to be "tough or show adults they were old enough"; "other reasons" for drinking accounted for 19 percent of the responses, compared to 31 percent of the non-runaways.

The most popular reason for drinking among both groups was "when happy". The runaways, however, were more likely to drink when nervous or worried than were the non-runaways.

While an overwhelming majority of runaways drink when they are "happy or feeling good", 58.7 percent also drink to avoid unpleasant feelings such as anger, anxiety, boredom, and sadness.

One-hundred and fourty-three runaways (30 percent) drink only when they are happy, and do not drink to avoid anxiety or stress. But it was also found that:

—50 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *to be accepted.*
—54.2 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *when happy.*
—60.1 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *when nervous or worried.*
—62 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *to avoid stress.*
—67.5 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *when sad.*
—67.9 percent of the runaways who drink to get drunk, also drink *when bored.*

These statistics can also be expressed as follows:

—32.8 percent of runaways drink *to be accepted*, also drink to get drunk.
—37.5 percent of runaways drink *when sad*, also drink to get drunk.
—40.7 percent of the runaways drink *when bored*, also drink to get drunk.
—41.7 percent of runaways drink *when nervous or worried*, also drink to get drunk.
—44.1 percent of runaways drink *when angry*, also drink to get drunk.
—55.2 percent of runaways drink *to avoid stress*, also drink to get drunk.
—61.8 percent of runaways drink *when happy*, also drink to get drunk.

It appears that from one-third to one-half of the runaways who drink to avoid unpleasant feelings or stress, cope with these feelings by getting drunk.

Drinking More Than Friends

Approximately one out of ten youth in each group said they drank more than their friends: 11 percent of the runaways and 9.6 percent of the non-runaways.

Effects of Drinking

Being arrested after drinking was reported by 10 percent of the youth in both groups, usually because they had been drunk and disorderly and/or had created some kind of public disturbance. A few had been involved in criminal acts.

Thirteen percent of the youth (11.1 percent of runaways) found that their drinking interferes with school; 3 percent (2.3 percent of the runaways) have had to drop out of school because of their drinking; 1.7 percent have lost their jobs. Drinking also caused 15.3 percent (12 percent of non-runaways) to have been in accidents and 25.8 percent (15.6 percent of non-runaways) to have been in fights.

Conflict seemed to be a problem for youth as a result of drinking; 28.6 percent of the runaways have had conflicts with parents, compared to only 8 percent among non-runaways, and 7.2 percent with school authorities.

The loss of a friend of the same sex had been the result of drinking for 6.4 percent; 8.7 percent have lost a friend of the opposite sex (total 15.1 percent). Other problems, listed by 1.5 percent, ranged from being thrown out of the house to truancy.

Drinking was more likely to interfere with schooling of runaways. Conflict with parents as a consequence of drinking was also much more prevalent in the runaway sample.

Beer, Wine Or Liquor?

Beer was the most popular alcoholic beverage; over half drank it in both groups while 55 percent never drank liquor or did so less than once a month and about 29 percent of the total sample drank liquor more than once a month. Two-thirds of the group said they never drank wine while 30 percent in each group did. Table IV-6 shows the reported amount of alcohol consumed by runaways.

Beer seems to be the favorite alcoholic drink for the youth with almost one-third (30.9 percent) of them drinking four or more bottles at one sitting. Generally speaking, the older youth, primarily non-runaways, drank more than the younger youth, primarily runaways. Table IV-7 shows the frequency of liquor consumption among runaways.

TABLE IV-6

REPORTED AMOUNTS OF ALCOHOL CONSUMED BY RUNAWAYS

# of bottles, cans or drinks	Beer	Wine	Liquor
0	35.7%	53.0%	54.5%
1	9.7%	12.1%	9.2%
2	12.0%	12.9%	12.9%
3	11.6%	7.8%	7.8%
4	11.8%	7.6%	5.7%
5	5.1%	2.3%	3.7%
6	12.0%	3.3%	4.1%
more than 6	2.0%	.8%	2.0%

TABLE IV-7

REPORTED FREQUENCY OF LIQUOR CONSUMPTION AMONG RUNAWAYS

Frequency	Beer	Wine	Liquor
Never; less than once a month	44.7%	60.4%	60.7%
Once a week or more	26.4%	13.6%	12.6%
Daily	4.9%	2.6%	1.5%
2-3 times a month	19.8%	16.8%	18.4%
Not at present	4.2%	6.6%	6.9%

Correlations Between Alcohol Use Variables In Runaway Sample

Many of the survey items were found to correlate highly with each other (r = .35). That is, of the related items, if one item occurred, the other was also likely to occur. The following correlational analysis is based on the runaway sample.

The highest correlation (r = .84749) occurs between runaways who report that drinking interfered with school and those who felt they had a drinking problem at age 12. Those who state that they drank heavily at that early age have trouble in school, as do those who think they *presently* have a drinking problem (r = .3753) and those who once thought they had a problem (r = .41424). As can be expected, those who report that drinking interferes with school, also report that on occasion they drink before school (r = .54616), as well as the fact that those who drink before school and after school, do so during school (r = .5228 and r = .49714, respectively).

Drinking alone was highly correlated with drinking before school (r = .39792) and drinking during school (r = .35444). As anticipated, there is a high correlation between runaways who drink alone and those who get drunk after drinking alone (r = .59524).

A high correlation exists between runaways who drink after school and those who report drinking once a week or more (r = .43881) and those who drink almost every weekend (r = .43473).

An interesting cluster of drinking consequences were found to be related to the runaways who report drinking once a week or more. Related to this item are experiencing blackouts (r = .37946), drinking before age 11 (r = .52445) and fighting after drinking (r = .35661). This item, drinking having caused fights, was also related to the event of drinking causing parental conflicts (r = .36304). A high correlation also exists between runaways who report drinking once a week or more and those who drink almost every weekend (4 = .63225).

Of special interest is the inter-relationship between the individual reasons reported for drinking and their relationship to frequency of drinking. The relationship between those who drink almost every weekend and those who report drinking when sad and nervous or worried is very strong (r = .36691 and r = .37667, respectively). The relationship between these two reasons, and drinking when bored and/or angry is also strong: The relationship between those who drink when nervous or worried is: r = .35144 with those who drink when sad and r = .38755 with those who drink when bored.

Those who report drinking when sad also have a strong relationship with those who report drinking when bored (r = .5124). The incidence of drinking when angry is also high correlated with drinking when sad (r = .43271) and drinking when bored (r = .53232).

Clearly then, the interrelationship of these items indicate the interdependence of the factors involved in runaway drinking behavior and alcohol abuse by runaways.

Drug Use Among Runaways

Marijuana is the most frequently used drug, used daily by nearly one out of five runaways; weekly by one out of four. (See Table IV-8) Of runaways who drink (79.3 percent, N = 475), 49.2 percent or 234 combine drugs and alcohol always or sometimes. Hence, we can conclude that almost half of the runaways who do drink, combine alcohol and drugs regularly.

Amount of Alcohol and Drug Consumption By Runaways

Thirty-five runaways drink daily (5.8 percent of 600; 8.4 percent of 475). The majority (19 or 54 percent of 35) drink only beer on a daily basis. Five drink wine only; two drink liquor; the others drink a combination of beer and wine and liquor.

Parent's Use of Alcohol

Total Sample

Thirty-six percent of the runaways said their mothers occasionally used alcohol as did 30 percent of the non-runaway mothers. Twenty-one and three tenths said she abstained, while 11 percent of the non-runaways said their mothers didn't drink. Sixteen and two-tenths percent said she drank regularly to moderately, compared to 30 percent of the non-runaways. Seven percent said she was frequently intoxicated, compared to only 4.2 percent of the non-runaways.

One-fourth of the runaway fathers occasionally used alcohol, compared to 41.4 percent of the non-runaways. An equal number of fathers in both groups were found to drink regularly or moderately. Sixteen percent of the runaways fathers abstain, while 27 percent of the non-runaways did, and 17.1 percent were frequently intoxicated compared to 2.1 percent of the non-runaways, the largest difference.

More non-runaway mothers were reported to be regular heavy users of alcohol than the runners, however, the runaway's mothers were more often intoxicated. Among the fathers, the non-runaways were more often regular, occasional and abstainers than were the runaways' fathers who were intoxicated more than three times as often.

Mothers of Runaways

Nearly one out of ten runaways did not know how much or how often their mothers used alcohol. Twenty and one tenths percent (20.1 percent) said she was an abstainer, 36.[illegible] percent said she used it occasionally, 3.4 percent said she used it regularly but moderately.

Twenty-one and four tenths percent (21.4 percent) said their mother was a regular and heavy drinker; 9.4 percent said that she was occasionally intoxicated; 7.8 percent said she was frequently intoxicated. In other words, 17.2 percent of mothers (or almost one-fifth) were seen as being intoxicated by the youth.

There was no difference at all in reported drinking behavior among mothers living alone and the married mothers ($p < .975$ percent) of runaways.

Fathers of Runaways

Of 572 runaway respondents, 20.5 percent said they did not know their fathers' drinking patterns. Ten and five tenths percent (10.5 percent) of the fathers were described as abstainers. Thirty-seven and seven tenths percent (37.7 percent) of the fathers drink occasionally and moderately.

Twelve and seven tenths percent (12.7 percent) of youth said fathers were occasionally intoxicated. Seventeen and two tenths percent (17.2 percent) of youth said their fathers were frequently intoxicated.

Twenty-nine and nine tenths percent (29.9 percent) or nearly one-third of the fathers were seen as being intoxicated regularly.

Youth's Attitudes and Perception of Other's Attitudes Towards Alcohol Use

How Did They Perceive Their Parent's Attitudes Towards Adolescent Alcohol Use?

Nine and six tenths percent (9.6%) (14.3% of males and 6.4% of females) said their fathers accepted regular adolescent alcohol use. Only 6% thought their mother accepted regular alcohol use by adolescents.

Occasional use was perceived to be acceptable to 21.2% of the fathers and 17.8% of the mothers.

Limiting alcohol use only to special occasions was thought to be the view of 23.7% of the fathers and 21% of the mothers.

The youth felt that 45.6% of their fathers and 39.7% of their mothers rejected any kind of adolescent alcohol use.

While females perceived their fathers as least accepting, both males and females were more likely to view their fathers as rejecting the use of alcohol among adolescents.

(In a cross-tabulation of perceived attitudes of fathers by sex, $p<.05$; by age, $p<.12$; by race, $p<.0072$.)

Among girls, Blacks see their father as more accepting of regular alcohol use, a view held by 17.6% of Black females and 4.2% of White females ($p<.0085$). There is no significant difference for males in different racial/ethnic groups ($p<.62$).

Youths' Attitude Towards Parental Alcohol Use

Five hundred twenty-three youths answered the question regarding their feelings about their parents' drinking. One-third (32.6%) said they did not care. Another third (35.1%) felt okay. The remaining third expressed varying degrees of concern:

10.5% are a little worried.
7.9% are worried.
13.9% are very worried.

Youths' Attitude Towards Peer Drinking

The runaways were questioned regarding the acceptability of alcohol abuse by someone their own age. Only 11.5% felt that it was never okay. Twenty-one and three tenths percent (21.3%) said regular use was acceptable. Forty-three percent (43%) felt it should be limited to occasional use and 20.3% limited it to special occasions.

Interestingly, the youth perceived their friends to be more accepting of alcohol use among adolescents.

Thirty-seven and eight tenths percent (37.8%) said their friends approved of regular alcohol use (this approval increased with age, especially among males). Thirty-two and eight tenths percent (32.8%) thought their friends approved of occasional use. Fifteen and five tenths percent (15.5%) limited it to special occasions (especially female respondents).

Five and eight tenths percent (5.8%) of the respondents (mostly females) said alcohol alcohol use was never acceptable to their friends. (In a cross-tabulation by sex, $p < .03$; by age, $p < .0009$). They found youth their own age (peers but not friends) to be even more accepting.

Forty-two percent (42%) said kids their own age found regular use to be acceptable (this attitude was more prevalent among older youth).

Thirty-one percent (31%) said occasional use was acceptable.

Eleven percent (11%) said kids their own age felt adolescent alcohol use should be limited to special occasions. Only 5% said they perceived kids their own age to be against alcohol use (again, this was especially so among younger youth). In a cross-tabulation by age, the significance level was $p < 0.000$; in a cross-tabulation by town, $p < .07$).

Youth in rural areas tended to perceive other adolescents as more accepting of regular adolescent alcohol use then did youth from other small towns, suburbs or cities.

Perceived Attitudes of Community

Fifteen and nine tenths percent (15.9%) of the males and only 5% of the females felt their home communities accepted regular adolescent alcohol use. White youth were least likely to hold this view: 21.4% of this group were Black, 8.7% White and 23.8% Hispanic.

Whites were also more likely to say their communities condemned adolescent use: a view held by 37.8% of the respondents (36.9% Blacks, 44.6% Whites, 33.3% Hispanics). Here, too, there were more females (57.7%) than males (47.8%).

Occasional use only was perceived acceptable to the community by 28.1% females and 16.9% males. This group included proportionately more Whites (26.8%) than Blacks (14.3%) or Hispanic youth (14.3%).

Perceived attitudes of the community differed little among males and females in the Black population ($p < .59\%$). But in the White population, males were most likely to consider that their community accepts regular adolescent alcohol use (12.4% of White males, vs.

6.5% of White females); an opinion held by 27.3% of Black males and 17.6% of Black females.

Age and sex of youth who perceive their community as accepting regular adolescent alcohol use:

Age	*Males*	*Females*
13	18.8%	30.5%
14	35.3%	34.9%
15-16	46.2%	40.3%
17	63.4%	43.4%

Perceived Attitude of Religion

Thirty-four percent (34%) of the youth did not answer this question. This percentage included 111 of those who answered who had no religion.

3 %	said regular use is okay
9.6%	said occasional use is okay
19.4%	said special occasions only
67.9%	felt that their religion did not accept any adolescent alcohol use

Catholics saw their religion as somewhat more tolerant: 50% of the Catholics said their church condoned regular use vs. 38.4% of other religions.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE, PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE AND RUNNING AWAY

Introduction

Because of the great number of runaways who have been found to drink alcohol (80%), this chapter will examine more closely the relationship between these two factors as well as their relationship to other variables. Through the use of correlational and regression techniques, the factors relating to both dependent variables will provide predictive evidence and will delineate those common factors which seem to lead to both forms of coping behavior. Findings are based on responses from the total sample of 907 youth, *618* runaways and *289* high school students.

Running Away and Alcohol Abuse

A direct correlation between current running away behavior and adolescent alcohol abuse (measured by the Alcohol Problem Index-API) yielded a coefficient of .0358, which was not significant. This finding is not surprising since it's been shown that the drinking patterns of runaway and non-runaway youth are in many ways similar (see Chapter V). In order to discover which factors did appear to relate to both running away and drinking, a correlational analysis was conducted of individual API items and demographic variables with these factors and adolescent alcohol abuse and running away. The following graph (VI-1) illustrates the distribution of the individual API item with runaways and non-runaways. As shown, the greatest discrepancy between the two groups occur on those items which indicate social and familial disruption. Further analysis generated the following table of correlations:

Table V - 2

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF VARIABLES RELATED TO ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE AND RUNNING AWAY

Variable Description	Alcohol Abuse (measured by the API)	Running Away
Age of Youth	.1146 +	-.1948 +
Type of Student	.1200 +	.3272 +
School Drop-out	-.1069	.3229 +
Type of Home	.1344 +	.1253 +
Death of Mother	-.1006	.0790 *
Divorce in the Family	-.0693 +	.1183 +
Hometown (Density)	.0644 +	.4545 +

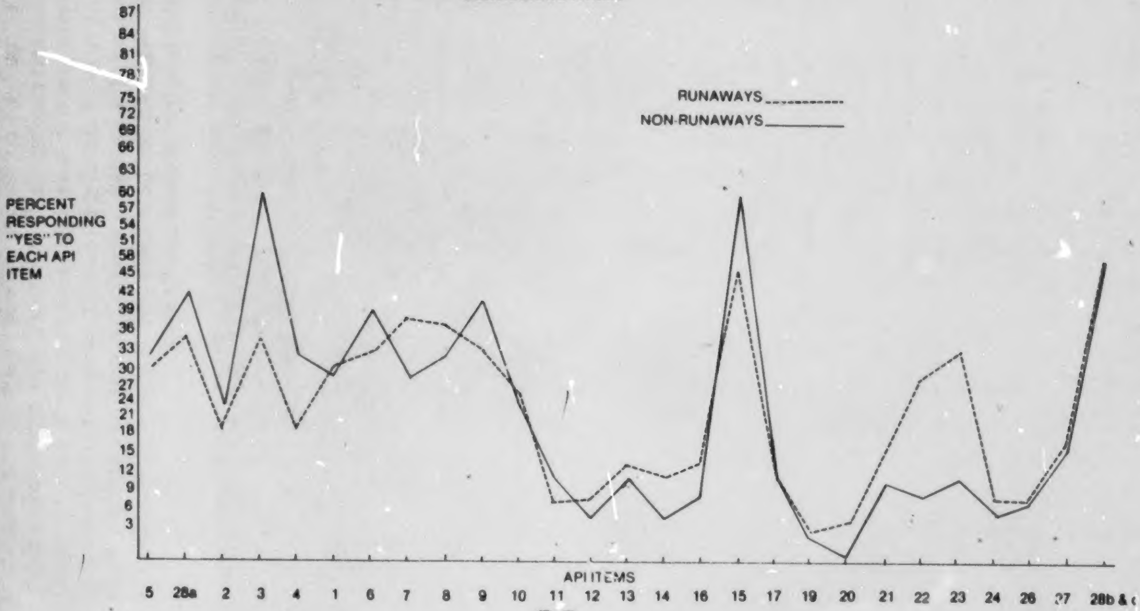
Drinking After School	.5957 +	.1139 +
Drinking When Nervous or Worried	.5302 +	.1089 *
Youth Arrested After Drinking	-.4023 +	.0673 x
Drinking Interfered with School	.4766 +	.0874 *
Drinking Caused Loss of Same-Sex Friend	-.2321 +	.1184 +
Drinking Caused Accident	-.4041 +	.0969 *
Drinking Caused a Serious Fight	-.4826 +	.2220 +
Drinking Caused Conflict with Parents	-.4734 +	.1852 +
Drinking Caused Conflict with School Authorities	-.3722 +	.0707 x
Parental Alcohol Abuse	.3010 +	.1626 +

+ $p < .001$ * $p < .01$ x $p < .05$

The table further illustrates the predominately negative drinking pattern which seems to be most characteristic of those youth who are likely to run away and have a drinking problem. The remainder of this chapter will further examine the effect of these variables on drinking and running away.

TABLE V-1

COMPARISON BETWEEN RUNAWAYS AND
NON-RUNAWAYS IN RESPONSE TO
INDIVIDUAL API ITEMS



Parental Alcohol Abuse, Running Away, And Adolescent Alcohol Abuse

Because of the high correlation between parental and adolescent alcohol abuse and running away, this factor was more closely examined and broken down into various levels in order to test the significance of each level of drinking on running away and adolescent alcohol use. Because of the possible effect of parental role models, these factors were analyzed for both male and female adolescents. The following table lists the obtained coefficients:

TABLE V - 3
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT DEGREES OF PARENTAL ALCOHOL USE AND MALE AND FEMALE RUNNING AND DRINKING BEHAVIOR

		ALCOHOL ABUSE (API)		RUNNING AWAY	
		MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES
MOTHER	Abstinence/Light Drinking	.0012	-.1403 +	.1743 +	.1630 +
	Moderate Drinking	.0828 +	.1222 +	.1644 +	-.2499 +
	Heavy Drinking/Intoxication	-.0008	.1229 +	-.0463	.0798 +
FATHER	Abstinence/Light Drinking	.0874x	-.1266 +	-.2704 +	-.3380 +
	Moderate Drinking	.0817x	.0344	-.0596	-.0404
	Heavy Drinking/Intoxication	-.1195 +	.1777 +	.2362 +	.2455 +

+ $p < .001$ x $p < .05$

These results support not only the notion of parental role models on adolescent drinking and running away but also show the greater effect parental drinking has on adolescent girls than boys. Girls' drinking is related to both mothers' and fathers' level of alcohol use. It seems that females look both to the mother and father for models of responsible drinking. As mothers' drinking approaches the abstinence level and fathers' drinking the moderate and absinence levels, girls' drinking generally decreases. Adolesent males, on the other hand, are almost unaffected by their mother's drinking behavior. Though related to all levels of father's drinking, the nature of the correlations are all positive. It seems that males' drinking is related positively to their father's drinking regardless of how much or little their fathers do drink.

Examining now the role of parental drinking on running away behavior, near identical trends for the male and female adolescent are evident. Perplexingly, youths whose mothers are light drinkers or abstainers are more likely to run away. Exactly the opposite trend is found for fathers who drink at this level. But, for fathers who are heavy drinkers, the incidence of their sons or daughters running away is significant.

Family Composition

The type of home the youth comes from also has an effect on his or her drinking and running behavior. Both male and female adolescents are least likely to run or abuse alcohol if living with both natural parents. That is, as the family arrangement shifts toward a disrupted home life, the incidence of these behaviors is likely to increase. Males were found to run if they come from homes with only one natural parent (r = .100) or if institutionalized (r = .2267). Females were also likely to run if institutionalized (r = .1498) but contrary to the males, were more likely to run if from a reconstituted home: with a stepmother or stepfather (r = .1081).

Drinking patterns were, however, not so affected by type of home. Again, living with both natural parents was likely to decrease alcohol abuse for males and females alike (r = .0931 and r = -.0978, respectively). While the two other types of living arrangements don't significantly relate to alcohol abuse, institutionalization is positively related to both sexes (males, r = .0894; females, r = .1467).

Age of Youth

The age factor as well as the related grade factor were significantly related to both running and drinking and were thus further investigated. This factor led to some interesting patterns and results. The thirteen year old youth were found to have the least amount of factors related to drinking and running away. In fact, living with both natural parents was negatively correlated with degree of alcohol problems (r = -.2600) and running away (r = -.4489). It was found, however, that the most significant factor was drinking when angry, which had a correlation coefficient of r = .6771 with drinking abuse and r = .2164 with running away. Apparently, if these youth can vent their anger through drinking they are able to cope.

Surprisingly, the greatest number of factors found to relate to both adolescent alcoholism and running away were present in the fourteen year old youth. These factors were predominately groups in the areas of negative reasons for drinking and disrupted life events. Youth at this age who were likely to run, drink when sad (r = .1340), when nervous or worried (r = .1881), when bored (r = .1818), and drink more than peers (r = .1161). The same reasons for drinking were also positively correlated with alcohol use; drinking when sad (r = .6908), when bored (r = .6204), when nervous or worried (r = .7049), and drinking more than peers (r = .4049).

Disruptive behavior caused by drinking also related to drinking and running away for fourteen year olds. In the school setting, drinking having caused conflict with authorities correlated r = .4094 with alcohol use and r = .1916 with running away; for the factor, drinking interfered with school, r = .5005 with alcohol abuse and r = .1413 with running away. Conflict was also a significant factor for youth at this age. For those whom drinking caused a serious fight, r = .4696 with alcohol abuse and r = .2300 with running away; if drinking cause conflict with parents r = .5700 with drinking and r = .2288 with running away.

The factors involved in running away and drinking for 15-17 year olds dramatically decreased. Fifteen year olds were found to have a positive relationship between drinking interfering with school and an alcohol problem (r = .5784), and running away (r = .1400). This age group also has conflict with parents caused by drinking related to alcohol abuse (r = .4693) and with running away (r = .1590).

The sixteen year old followed the same pattern as the fifteen year olds but for the sixteen year old youth more factors were found to be present. The youth in this group who drink alone were also likely to have an alcohol problem (r = .5686) and to run away (r = .1116). They also had the same cluster of conflicts caused by drinking as the fourteen year old which related to alcohol use and running away. For drinking having caused conflict with parents r = .3776 with alcohol use and r = .1249 with running away; having been in a serious fight r = .3638 with drinking, r = .2831 with running away; and if drinking caused an accident r = .3561 with alcohol use and r = .1474 with running away.

Predictive Analysis Utilizing a Regression Model Including the Correlated Factors

Because of the significant correlation found between the factors presented in Table VI-1, a regression formula was run to determine the amount of prediction which could be made on the basis of the factors. It was found that these factors accounted for approximately 77% of adolescent drinking behavior and 68% of running away behavior. Because, however, many of the factors are highly correlated, a second analysis was run with the computation of these factors into a multiplicative factor.

This regression analysis indicated that the negative causes and consequences of drinking as well as parental alcohol abuse, age, type of student, and type of home explained 37 percent of the variance in adolescent alcohol use. This same cluster of factors explained 54 percent of the variance in running away. These disruptive consequences of drinking could be the major causes of stress for both behaviors.

Summary

In summary, while the overall concept of adolescent alcohol abuse is not significantly related to running away, certain characteristic drinking patterns are. These factors seems to be in the disruptive behavior or the group of negative causes of drinking. Furthermore, the role of parental alcohol abuse, while significant, has different effects on males and females for each level of parental drinking. Girls' drinking is affected by almost all levels of father's and mother's drinking while boys drinking is related, for the most part, to father's alcohol use. Both sexes are equally affected by parental drinking in terms of their running behavior. Age is also a significant factor, and it seems that the lower the age, especially age 14, the more problem behaviors will be exhibited by the youth both as a cause and consequence of drinking.

It seems, then, that the combination of early age, abstaining or frequently intoxicated parents, and the presence of conflicts with parents, school authorities, and fighting as well as disruption of school activities caused by alcohol use, points to an adolescent who has a potential drinking problem and is a potential run away.

CHAPTER VI

ADOLESCENT LIFE STRESS: CONSTRUCTION OF THE LIFE EVENTS INVENTORY (LEI)

The second hypothesis states that there is a positive correlation between LIFE STRESS and adolescent running away or coping behavior. This chapter looks at the current theory and research regarding stress and coping as applied to adolescent avoidance coping behavior; and presents the development of the adolescent Life Events Inventory (LEI) used in the tests of this hypothesis.

Review of the literature on life stress

The concept of stress was first introduced into the life sciences by endocrinologist Hans Selye in 1936. Years of laboratory research on the physiological mechanisms of adaptation to the stress of life had convinced Selye that the basic principles of defense on the cellular level are largely applicable also to people and even to entire societies of man. Stress as defined by Selye was systematic stress and included the concept of defense to a stress or stimulus.[1]

Another definition says that stress is an event or condition of the physical or social environment which leads to avoidant, escapist, aggressive or problem solving measures specifically designed to remove or weaken the offending condition. This definition focuses on the stimuli or stressor that leads to change. Selye's definition looks at the outcome from such stimuli (increased blood pressure - personality disintegration) and the emotional state accompanying a changing personal or social situation.

This study uses the definition of stress as stressor-stimulus, a life event to which the individual must respond.

The Measurement of Stress and Readjustment: Life Events Inventories

In order to research stress, it is necessary to specify the relationship between the input stressor variables and output stress symptoms or behavioral response variables.

Much work in this area has been done by Thomas H. Holmes and Richad H. Rahe of the U.S. Navy Neuropsychiatric Research Unit in San Diego, California.[2] They developed an adult Life Events Scale which shows that cluster of social events requiring change in ongoing life adjustments are significantly associated with the time of illness onset. In order to measure the impact of each stressful life event, Holmes and Rahe devised the social readjustment rating scale. The define readjustment as follows:

> Social readjustment includes the amount and duration of change in one's accustomed pattern of life resulting from various life events.[3]

A revision of the original Social Readjustment Rating Scale was developed by R.D. Coddington[4] and applied to the field of child psychiatry. It is highly predictive of physical or psychiatric illness.[5]

A more recent study used a life events inventory based on the Holmes-Rahe and Coddington scales.[6] David Duncan, a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas School of Public Health, recently gave a group of 31 known juvenile drug abusers a list of 43 life events and asked them to name which happened to them the year *before* they turned to drugs. The drug abusers showed significantly higher life stress scores than the normal adolescent population to whom they were compared. Items which occurred most frequently were: increase in arguments with parents, changes in school, school failure, change in family income. He defined stress as the internal reaction to an excessive amount of life change calling for repeated adjustments in one's way of life, beyond one's capacity to adjust.[7]

Relationship Between Stressor Stimulus and Coping Response

A revision of the Holmes and Rahe scale was developed by Dr. Margaret Beyer in a study on runaway youth and their siblings. She found that runaways reported significantly more "personal" life events in the twelve months previous to the study than did their non-runaway siblings. She distinguished between "personal" events such as school failure and "home" events, common occurrences for members of the same family.[8] This distinction is important, but rarely made: it looks at the source of the stressor (from within or without the family). A more complete picture would also require: a) a look at the circular, rather than linear path from stressor to response (does stress cause the event, or does the event cause the stress?); b) an examination of the relation of the stressor - events to other contexts, i.e., role and culture; c) a study of mediating factors such as family or peer support.

For instance, a study on stress and behaviorial impairment showed that undesirability rather than amount of change was a better definition of stressor.

Coping response to stress

While recognizing that mediating factors can affect the coping behavior, it is necessary to define what is meant by coping. From the preceding section, it follows that healthy coping constitutes a response which allows the person to maintain some sort of equilibrium between his internal milieu and the external environment; or which allows the individual to make the necessary adjustments to external change.

The psychological view of the coping response

Most of the groundwork on coping was done by Freud in his massive analysis of defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms, in the classical sense, are unconscious efforts made by the individual to reduce anxiety. Classical defense mechanisms, appropriate to this discussion, are repression (turning anger against one's self rather than towards another, often used by suicides and drug abusers; withdrawal (physically avoiding any anxiety-provoking situation); behavioral defenses (any repetitive action which masks anxiety).[9]

Although defense mechanisms are often labelled as "bad", they are an essential and normal component of any coping process. As Lois Murphy comments so wisely in her observation of coping behavior in pre-school children: defense mechanisms are normally and constructively used in the total process of coping; they become pathological only when they interfere with progress in coping.[10]

What determines the coping response? To look solely at the complexity of Freud's defense system would constitute a simplistic response. As Lazarus points out, both situational *and* personality variables are "the antecedent conditions or pre-determinants of coping response." Psychologists are therefore joining sociologists in looking at the relationships between the physical and social environment and the individual's inner resources.

The sociological view of the coping process

Robert Merton lists the following types of possible individual adaptation behaviors:

1. Conformity (most widely used in a stable society)
2. Innovation (common in an upwardly mobile society)
3. Ritualism ("routinized action")
4. Retreatism (rejection of cultural goals and institutional means, especially when *both* cultural goals and institutional practices have been accepted but are *not* accessible)
5. Rebellion (presupposes rejection or alienation from cultural goals)

Merton's theory is based heavily on certain aspects of the culture (goals and norms) and the social structure (access to means).[11]

It is interesting to note, however, how the three historical classifications of runaways fit into this adaptation classification. The classic image of the runaway is that of a Huck Finn or Horatio Alger, out to better his place in the world ("the innovation" type of adaptive behavior). In the early 60's, the middle class flower children who flocked to counter-culture meccas were, to a large extent, rebelling against cultural goals and norms but did not lack the access to culturally sanctioned goals.

Today's runaways appear to engage in what Merton calls retreatism: they do not reject society's values, but have either been outright rejected by their families (the so-called "throwaways") or lack the personal or institutional means to reach these goals. Admittedly, these are generalizations pointing to an overall pattern, so far undocumented by hard data, although reported in the runaway literature.[12] What Merton calls retreatism parallels with what Goldstein calls avoidance behavior.

Albert Cohen, commenting on Merton's theories, states that despite Merton's sociological orientation, his emphasis is still too much on the individual and neglects the effect of others on the ego's adaptation behavior. He speaks not of stress, but of *strain* which he defines as:

> A function of the degree of disjunction between goals and means or the sufficiency of means to the attainment of goals.[13]

And then asks:

> But how imperious must the goals be, how uncertain their attainment, how incomplete their fulfillment, to generate strain?
>
> Given strain, what will a person do about it?

The sociologist's answer (as perhaps best illustrated by Cloward and Ohlin) is that deviant or non-deviant action, adaptive or maladaptive coping behavior, is not contrived within the solitary individual psyche, but is part of a collaborative social activity.[14] This raises some interesting theoretical questions regarding the increase in adolescent running away, not as a respone to increased stress in the life of adolescents (pre-supposing there is a relationship between stress and running away and/or alcohol abuse) but as a result of increased social "conditioning" to running away as appropriate retreatist/avoidance methods of coping.

Coping in adolescence

Does coping in adolescence differ significantly from coping in adulthood. Helen Perlman states that the coping problem-solving process begins at birth.[15] Lois Murphy, points out that successful coping depends on warm, accepting mothering experiences during infancy, a view supported by many psychologists ranging from Janov, the originator of primal therapy, to Bettelheim, early childhood specialist.[16, 17, 18] A related view is held by anthropologists who observe the cross-cultural response patterns to paternal acceptance-rejection as measured on the warmth dimension.[19]

Coping in adolescence, then, should reflect coping patterns acquired at earlier stages of the life cycle. Likewise, ego coping in adulthood would appear to follow from adolescent coping and adaptation efforts to reach life cycle and society imposed tasks and goals.

To state that adolescence is a time of turmoil and stress is almost redundant. It should be pointed out, though, that the underlying rationale for this paper is not to look at coping responses to life cycle stress, but to super-imposed stress.

The study is specifically focusing on environmental stress (with the narrow definition of events which are perceived as negative or threatening) and on a few selected environmental variables which may possibly influence the coping response.

Procedures for developing the Life Events Inventory

Earlier, reference was made to other life events inventories. Most of these are based on the adult life events scale developed by Thomas H. Holmes and Richard H. Rahe at the United States Navy Neuropsychiatric Research Unit in San Diego, California.

In order to measure the impact of each stressful life event Holmes and Rahe devised the social readjustment rating scale. The mechanics defined for rating the scale were quite complex. Event 1, marriage, was given an arbitrary value of 500. A convenience sample of 394 was asked to look at 43 life events and rate them in relative order.

If an event represented less and shorter readjustment than marriage, this would be indicated by placing a proportionately smaller number in the opposite blank. The resulting Social Readjustment Rating Scale consisted of the mean scores of each item. There was high consensus among subject-raters of the relative rank order and magnitude of each event.

The Thurstone method of scale construction

The method of construction of the LEI parallels the API construction. It is usually suggested that a group of judges, working individually, sort a series of statements regarding the attribute being studied into a series of piles, A through K, according to the relative degree they measure the attribute.[20] This system was pre-tested using nine piles, with a group of 14 youths from Wheaton, Maryland. They were asked to sort 83 life events according to their relative degree of stressfulness.

These 83 items were drawn from an adolescent life events inventory designed by Dr. Margaret Beyer while a doctoral student at Yale University.[21] Other items were added on the basis of information gleaned from the 1975 NYAP-NIAAA survey of adolescent alcohol abuse; on input from experienced youth workers and youth specialists at NYAP; and on relevant literature on adolescent growth and development.

Following the pre-test, in the spring of 1975, the original plan to construct a Thurstone type interval scale was revised. The pre-test indicated that the system of sorting events into piles was not only cumbersome and time consuming, but also frustrating to the participating adolescents. A certain amount of precision was lost because of the youths' haphazard handling of so many different cards.

The revised plan called for asking a criterion sample of youth to rate each item on the scale from *one* to *five*, with one being the least stressful and five being the most stressful. A rating of zero was included for non-stressful items.

Next, for each item, the distribution of scaled values assigned by the various judges would be plotted in order to locate the median of this distribution. Those items whose value or semi-interquartile range was excessively large, indicating a major discrepancy among the judges, would be eliminated.

This criterion sample consisted of 195 youth from classrooms whose teachers volunteered to participate in the project. Access to the schools was obtained through personal relationships with the teachers, not through official school channels. For this reason, names of participating schools are withheld from this report. Data collection was anonymous and confidential and not made part of the youth's school files. The schools were located in San Francisco and Sonora, California; Tiffin, Ohio; Wheaton, Maryland; and Tampa, Florida.

Forty-two percent of these adolescents were male; 58 percent were female. The majority were Caucasian (65.9 percent). The others were Hispanic (9.2 percent), Black (6.4 percent), Oriental (5.8 percent), Native American (1.7 percent), and other (9.2 percent).

Their ages ranged from 13 (14.6 percent) to 17 (20.4 percent). Mean age was 14.9. Grade level ranged from a lone seventh grader to forty 12th graders. The mean grade level was 9.8. Over one-third (40.3 percent) of the respondents lived in the city. Only 8 percent were suburban youth. The others were fairly evenly divided among small town (26.7 percent) and rural youth (25 percent).

The Criterion Life Events Inventory

The final criterion inventory consisted of 83 items which could be classified into eight categories:

1. Items relating to parent-child relationships.
2. Items relating to significant-other relationships.
3. Items relating to school events.
4. Items relating to family events.
5. Items relating to personal events.
6. Items relating to personal alcohol/drug use.
7. Items relating to significant-other (including parental) drug/alcohol use.
8. Items relating to mental health/social/juvenile justice contacts.

The following list classifies the life event items into these eight categories:

1. *Items relating to Parent-Child Relationships*

   My father said he didn't want me.
   My mother said she didn't want me.
   I ran away from home.
   My parents asked me to leave home.
   The amount of time I spent with my family increased.
   The amount of time I spent with my family decreased.
   I had to choose which parent to live with.

2. *Items Relating to Significant-Other Relationships*

   I got someone pregnant or I got pregnant.
   I went out on my first date.
   I broke up with my steady girlfriend or boyfriend.
   My steady boyfriend or girlfriend broke up with me.
   I lost a good friend.
   A relative asked me to leave his/her home.
   I was accused of doing something that I did not do.

3. *Items relating to School Events*

   I got poor grades in school.
   I changed schools
   I got into trouble with a teach or principal at school.
   I was suspended from school.
   I got into trouble for cutting one or more days at school.
   I got into trouble for cutting classes.
   I got into trouble for fighting in school.

4. *Items Relating to Family Events*

   My parents got divorced.
   My mother remarried.
   My father remarried.
   My parents were fighting more than usual.
   My parents threatened to leave each other.
   My parents separated.
   My parents came back after separation.
   The amount of time my father spends at home decreased.
   The amount of time my mother spends at home decreased.
   My father was put in a mental hospital.
   My mother was put in a mental hospital.
   My mother died.

My father died.
My brother or sister died.
My father was laid off.
My mother was laid off.
My father was fired.
My mother was fired.
My parents seem more worried about money.
My brother or sister ran away from home.
My brother or sister got married.
My brother or sister had trouble with parents.
My mother was hospitalized.
My father was hospitalized.
My brother or sister was hospitalized.
My mother was sick or hurt.
My father was sick or hurt.
My brother or sister was sick or hurt.

5. *Items Relating to Personal Events*

I was sick or hurt.
A good friend of mine was sick or hurt.
I was hospitalized.
I was raped.
I got V.D.
I was robbed.
I was beaten up.
My grandparent died.
Another relative died.
A friend of mine died.
I moved to another house.
I moved from one town to another.
My allowance decreased.

6. *Items Relating to Personal Alcohol/Drug Use*

I used marijuana for the first time.
I started using drugs more than before.
I starting drinking heavily.
I used heroin.
I was drunk for the first time.
I blacked out after drinking.
I got into trouble for smoking cigarettes in school.
I got into trouble for doing drugs in school.

7. *Items Relating to Significant-Other (Including Parental) Alcohol/Drug Use*

I realized my mother was an alcoholic.
I realized my father was an alcoholic.
My friends found out my mother was an alcoholic.
My friends found out my father was an alcoholic.

My friends found out my brother or sister was an alcoholic.
I realized my brother/sister was an alcoholic.
My friends started using drugs.

8. *Items Relating to Mental Health/Social/Juvenile Justice Contacts*

   I was picked up by the police.
   I was taken to court.
   I was put on probation.
   I was put in jail or reform school.
   I was put in a mental hospital.

Construction of the LEI

These 195 adolescents were asked to judge the stressfulness of each of these 83 items. These youth were asked to give their help in finding out what is stressful *to an adolescent* ("rather than asking an adult, we are asking you").

Thirty of the 195 responses had to be eliminated for the following reasons:

1. Nineteen of the youth were age 18. The study is limited to 13 to 17 year olds.
2. Three youths filled in all the blanks, assigning more than one score per item.
3. Seven were eliminated for pattern responses — either all 0's or all 5's or in one case a 0-1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1-0 pattern.
4. One youth did not participate, writing "I have no feelings" across the top of the page.

Youth who completed only the first part of the form were not eliminated. The total numbers of respondents therefore was 165 - although the number per item ranged from 155 to 165.

Items were removed from inventory for the following statistical and theoretical reasons:

1. High quartile deviations which indicated low agreement among judges on the stressfulness of the item.
2. A medium score less than 1 which indicated a non-stressful item.
3. Low item by total correlation.
4. Redundancy or repeat meaning of another item.

The analysis lead to the reduction of the 83 items to 60 items.

The Median Test: A Validity Check

Common sense and theory indicate that different sub-groups of adolescents (i.e., rural versus urban youth) will assign a different stress rating to some of the items in the life stress inventory. To test the construct validity of the test scores, to check differences among sub-groups, a median test was conducted, comparing the median scores assigned to each item by different sub-groups.

The median test is statistical procedure which determines whether different groups have been drawn from the same populations with equal medians.

Significant differences at the .01 level were noted in the ratings of ten variables. In five instances, sex was the variable causing the difference. For others it was age, grade level and hometown.

In addition, item 23 (a friend of mine died) had significantly different medians ($P < .01$) according to the grade level of the respondents. Item 22, (a relative died) also reached significance at the .01 level in discriminating between grade level of the respondents.

Age subgroups resulted in different medians for item 60 (I got into trouble for cutting classes); item 61 (my mother was put in a mental hospital); and item 77 (my parents were fighting more than usual). "I lost a good friend" was the only item where a breakdown of the medians by sub-groups from different types of hometowns made a significant difference at the .01 level. Further differences were observed at the .05 and .10 level.

Revised Life Events Inventory And Final Scoring System

The final life events inventory consists of 60 items. They are presented in Table VI-1 with their median scores, according to the categories listed in this chapter. A copy of the actual inventory is found in Appendix-B.

TABLE VI - 1

FINAL LIFE EVENTS INVENTORY
AND SCORING SYSTEM

ITEM DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN STRESS SCORE
1. *Items Relating To Parent-Child Relationship*	
My father said he did not want me	4.604
My mother said she did not want me	4.731

I had to choose which parent to live with	4.518
My parents asked me to leave home	4.179

2. *Items Relating to Significant Other Relationships*

My relative asked me to leave his/her home	3.600
My steady broke up with me	3.870
I lost a good friend	3.939
I got someone pregnant	4.688
I got pregnant	4.682
I was accused of doing something I did not do	3.880

3. *Items Relating To School Events*

I got poor grades in school	2.417
I got into trouble for cutting classes	2.000
I got into trouble with a teacher or principal at school	2.382
I got into trouble for fighting in school	1.360

4. *Items Relating To Family Events*

My father was laid off	3.667
My father was fired	4.320
My mother was fired	3.861
My parents seemed more worried about money	2.946
My mother died	4.909
My father died	4.888
My brother or sister died	4.892
My mother was sick or hurt	3.870
My father was sick or hurt	3.942
My brother or sister was sick or hurt	3.361
My mother was hospitalized	4.073
My father was hospitalized	4.170
My brother or sister was hospitalized	3.808
My father was put in a mental hospital	4.775
My mother was put in a mental hospital	4.815
My mother was put in jail	4.736
My father was put in jail	4.685
My parents got divorced	4.500
My brother or sister ran away from home	3.217
My brother or sister had trouble with my parents	2.338
My parents were fighting more than usual	4.048
My parents threatened to leave each other	4.163
My parents separated	4.385

5. *Items Relating To Personal Events*

One of my grandparents died	4.584
Another relative died	3.989
A friend of mine died	4.524
I moved to another house	1.405

I was sick or hurt	2.625
I was hospitalized	3.176
I got V.D.	4.748
I was robbed	3.692
I was beaten up	3.921
I was raped	4.846
A friend was sick	3.361

6. *Items Relating to Personal Drug Use*

I got into trouble for doing drugs in school	4.379

7. *Items Relating to Mental Health/Social/Juvenile Justice Systems*

I was picked up by the police	3.946
I was taken to court	4.188
I was put on probation	3.792
I was put in a mental hospital	4.812
I was put in jail or a reform school	4.726

8. *Items Relating To Significant Other (Including Parents) Alcohol/Drug Use*

I realize my mother was an alcoholic	4.594
I realized my father was an alcoholic	4.594
I realized my brother or sister was an alcoholic	3.743
My friends found out my mother was an alcoholic	4.000
My friends found out my father was an alcoholic	4.015
My friends found out my brother or sister was an alcoholic	3.479

The final LEI consists of 60 items covering family, personal, and school events; alcohol and drug use by runaway and significant others; and contacts with the social, mental health, and juvenile justice systems.

The inventory shows some interesting characteristics which support the theory base on adolescent life cycle adaptation and cultural diversity:

- There was the greatest (nearly unanimous) agreement among the adolescents on the stressfullness of the *death of the mother*. There was the least agreement on the stressfulness of "I smoked marijuana for the first time." This item was dropped from the inventory.
- Generally speaking, the adolescents showed very high agreement regarding items with a high stress value: death of either parent or of sibling; mental hospitalization of self or parent; realization that parent is an alcoholic, etc.

- There also was consistent higher agreement regarding the stressfulness of events which occur to the mother (death, hospitalization, illness, alcoholism) than like events which occur to the father.
- Death, mental hospitalization, and jail sentence were rated as more stressful if it happened to mother than to father. Other hospitalization injury, or illness of mother was not judged as stressful as that of father.
- Alcoholism was rated as equally stressful in either parents, either when discovered by the youth or his peers.

Theory indicates that different subgroups of adolescents will assign a different stress rating to some of the items in the inventory. Generally, life events were rated as more "stressful" by younger youth, girls, and youth from rural areas, as the following examples indicate:

- Younger youth assigned a somewhat higher stress score to friends discovering that the respondent's father was an alcoholic. On the other hand, more girls exceeded the median stress score in rating stressfulness of realizing that either parent was an alcoholic.
- More urban youth assigned a lower score to the death of the mother and death of a sibling than did youth from small towns or rural areas. Death of the father, on the other hand, was assigned a lower stress score by 17 year olds than by younger youth. Mental hospitalization of either parent also was affected by age: thirteen year olds assigned it the greatest stress score. Parents fighting more than usual affected younger youth the most; while parents getting a divorce was most serious for rural youth.
- Getting pregnant was rated more stressful than getting someone pregnant. Although it should be noted that the difference was slight, venereal disease was rated more serious by girls, as was violence in the form of being raped or beaten.

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CHAPTER VII

LIFE EVENTS: ITS RELATION TO RUNNING AWAY AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Description of Substudy Population

The life events inventory was administered along with the recent alcohol survey to a subsample of runaways from six runaway centers by counselors trained in administering these instruments. These six runaway centers were: Spectrum—Burlington, Vermont; The Georgetown Streetwork Project—Washington, D.C.; Stay Center—Hamilton, Ohio; Pathfinders—Milwaukee, Wisconsin; The Youth Services Runaway Center—Anchorage, Alaska; and the Greenhouse—New Orleans, Louisiana.

The control sample of 251 high school youth were selected through personal and professional contacts from public schools in Alexandria, Virginia; and San Francisco and Sonora, California. This control group was administered the questionnaires in a classroom setting by volunteer teachers who had received telephone and written instructions regarding the purpose of the instruments. Because of the personal nature of some of the questions, teachers were asked to plan some time following the administration to allow feedback and discussion from the students. Reports from teachers and runaway counselors alike indicated that the youth, in general, were enthusiastic about participating in the study and appreciated the opportunity to talk or tell about themselves. As a result, few questionnaires had to be discarded due to "nonsense" answers.

Demographic Characteristics of Life Events Study Groups

This study group was nearly two-thirds female. The mean age was 15.5 (ages ranged from 12 to 17). The majority (77.8 percent) were White. The density of their home towns ranges from rural (32.2 percent) to small town (27.3 percent) to suburban (19.2 percent) and urban (21.2 percent). Runaways were most likely to be urban (r = .42).

The majority (59.3 percent) were in senior high school. Ten percent were school dropouts: these were primarily runaways.

Less than half (48.7 percent) lived with both natural parents; one out of five lived with their mother only. Separation or divorce had been experienced by 40 percent of the total sample: 46.9 percent of the runaways; 25.1 percent of the non-runaways.

Most fathers were employed full-time, as were one-third of the mothers. Unemployment was more prevalent among the parents of runaways than non-runaways. Generally speaking, respondents were middle-class, perhaps "lower" middle class. Parents tended to be skilled or clerical workers.

Over one-fourth of the youth were currently runaways. Another twelve percent stated that at one time or another they had run away from home. If these self-reported runaway episodes constitute true running away behavior, then nearly one-third of these youth have run away.

Over one-fourth of the current runaways have run more than once. One-third say their siblings have run away. Usually the youth do not run far, so that although the mean distance was a high 171 miles, the median was ten miles.

Over 80 percent of the runaways ran because of family problems. More than one out of ten stated that parental alcohol abuse contributed to their running. Runaway behavior was most prevalent in broken homes.

Negative Life Stress

Two events occurred to over half of the respondents: being accused wrongly (52.40 percent) and having poor grades in school (50.44 percent). It is unlikely that these events would discriminate between running away and non-running away behavior. Table VII-1 lists items which occurred to over one out of five of the respondents.

TABLE VII - 1

LIFE EVENTS WHICH OCCURRED TO OVER ONE OUT OF FIVE OF THE RESPONDENTS

(Rank Ordered By Frequency Of Occurrence)

LIFE EVENTS	RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF OCRENCE
—"parents being worried about money more than usual"	45.6%
—"cutting class"	37.2%
—"moving to a new home"	36.7%
—"mother sick"	34.1%
—"friends sick"	30.1%
—"trouble with teachers"	29.5%
—"relative died"	28.7%
—"father sick"	28.1%
—"sibling"	27.8%
—"sibling parent conflict"	25.5%
—"friend died"	24.1%
—"being sick or hurt"	23.5%
—"picked up by police"	21.6%
—"lost a good friend"	20.9%
—"grandparent died"	20.1%

Since injury or illness were undefined in the questionnaire, the respondents may have included mild illnesses in this category. Hospitalization, indicating more serious injury or illness of self, parents, or siblings seems to have occurred to about one out of ten of the respondents.

The high percentage of youth stating that a friend died may be a function of sample selections: the death of one student in one classroom would be stressful to all students in that classroom and probably be referred to a "death of a friend" in a life events questionnaire.

The percentage of youth who state they have been picked up by police is high (21.1%). This item has been assigned a high stress score (3.9).

"Parents being worried more than usual about money" undoubtedly reflects the inflationary national economy. This item has been assigned a stress score of 2.9. It was the third most frequently occurring life event item.

Items which occurred infrequently (to less than 2.5 percent of the population) were: "Mother fired," 1.4 percent; "using heroin for the first time," 2 percent; "mother died," 2.3 percent; "friends found out that respondent's sibling is alcoholic," 2 percent; "respondent found out that sibling is alcoholic," 1.7 percent; "respondent got someone pregnant," 2.3 percent; "respondent contracted venereal disease," 1.4 percent; "either parent was hospitalized," less than one percent.

Parental Alcohol Abuse and Rejection Items

Six items refer to alcohol abuse within the family: three items refer to parental rejection. The alcohol abuse items state either that the youth discovered that a parent or sibling is alcoholic, or that a friend found out that the respondents' parents or siblings are alcoholic.

Table VII-2 presents the relative frequency of occurrence of these events and their corresponding weights.

TABLE VII - 2

RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF ALCOHOL ABUSE RELATED LIFE EVENTS

EVENT	WEIGHT	RELATIVE FREQUENCY
"I found out my father is alcoholic"	4.594	8.6%
"I found out my mother is alcoholic"	4.594	3.4%
"I found out my sibling is alcoholic"	3.743	1.7%

"A friend found out my father is alcoholic"	4.000	8.6%
"A friend found out my mother is alcoholic"	4.000	4.3%
"A friend found out my sibling is alcoholic"	3.479	2.0%

These events seem to have affected close to ten percent of the youth.

The parental rejection life events items are: "being asked to leave home," 19.2 percent; "being rejected by father," 14 percent; "being rejected by mother," 16.6 percent. Based on these figures, close to one out of five of the respondents, at one time or another during the past year, had felt unwanted by their parents. A bivariate correlation of parental alcohol and parental rejection items shows that the correlations between the alcohol items and the LEI revealed a number of interesting patterns. See Table VII-3.

TABLE VII-3

BIVARIATE CORRELATION BETWEEN PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE AND PARENTAL REJECTION LIFE EVENT ITEMS

Description/Number	32	33	34	27	28	29	61	62	06	45
Mother Alcoholic (32)	1.00	.22	.14	.58	.27	.19	.19	.21	.22	.23
Father Alcoholic (33)		1.00	.11	.13	.59	.10	.22	.08	.13	.24
Sibling Alcoholic (34)			1.00	.18	.19	.61	.20	.11	.21	.23
Friend Found Out Mother Alcoholic (27)				1.00	.38	.17	.25	.16	.21	.14
Friend Found Out Father Alcoholic (28)					1.00	.10	.11	.15	.21	.21
Friend Found Out Sibling Alcoholic (29)						1.00	.11	.15	.18	.14
Mother Rejected (61)							1.00	.50	.36	.38
Father Rejected (62)								1.00	.56	.40
Asked To Leave Home (06)									1.00	.33
Beaten (45)										1.00

Youth who live in home where the mother is alcoholic are likely to have an alcoholic father (r = .22) as well as a sibling who is alcoholic (r = .14). Alcoholism in the home is more than likely known to friends, particularly sibling alcoholism (r = .61).

This cluster of events seems to influence rejection by either parent; if the mother has an alcohol problem, rejection by both parents is probable (r = .19 and .21 respectively). If the father is an alcoholic, the youth is more likely to feel rejected by the mother (r = .22) than by the father (r = .08), although both may ask him/her to leave home (r = .13). This may be a result of long standing and ignored rejection by father. The mother's difficulties in coping with the father's alcoholism may result in the youth's feeling rejected by the mother.

Feelings of rejection by either parent are highly correlated with being asked to leave home ($r = .36$. and .56). "Being beaten" was not identified in the questionnaire as "physical abuse by parent." It also could refer to "being beaten" on the playground. It was, however, very highly correlated with alcoholism by mother ($r = .23$) and father ($r = .24$). It seems safe to assume then that "being beaten" in most cases refers to "physical abuse by parent."

Distribution of Stress Scores Among Sub-population

- A breakdown of runaway incidence showed a higher degree of life stress among runaways ($p < .001$), with the greatest amount of stress occurring among recent runaways.

- Since dropout and running away behavior occurred primarily among the younger junior high age youth, there also was a corresponding increase in total life stress among younger youth ($p < .06$).

- Higher life stress scores were found among poor students than among good students; among drop-outs than non-dropouts ($p < .001$).

- The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient between life stress and parental alcohol abuse was .46 ($n = 349$, $p < .001$). *Between life stress and youth alcohol abuse, it was .34 ($n = 349$, $p < .001$).*

- Running because of family problems, for instance, was positively correlated with life stress ($r = .4219$, $n = 339$, $p < .001$). This variable was likewise positively correlated with parental alcohol abuse ($r = .3156$, $n = 339$, $p < .001$). There was less life stress ($r = .3112$) in homes with both natural parents, and increased life stress in reconstituted families ($r = .1669$) and other homes ($r = .222$). This would seem to indicate that *as life stress increases, running away behavior and alcohol abuse increases; as parental alcohol abuse increases, life stress increases.*

- The Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient between total life stress and parental alcohol abuse was .46 ($n = 349$, $p < .001$).

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE STRESS AS A PREDICTOR OF ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE

Introduction

The hypothesis states that as life stress, including the stress of parental alcohol abuse, increases, adolescent running away and adolescent alcohol abuse increases.

The main research questions at this point were:

1) What are the *effects* of parental alcohol abuse? (Specifically on running away and drinking behavior in the adolescent)
2) What are the *causes* of adolescent drinking? (Specifically is there a causal link between parental drinking and youth drinking; between life stress and youth drinking?)
3) To what extent are parental alcohol abuse and adolescent life stress interrelated?

Based on data obtained from the life events study group (see Chapter VII) these four variables (life stress, parental alcohol abuse, running away and adolescent alcohol abuse) produce the correlation matrix presented in Table VIII-1. In this matrix:

X_1 is parental alcohol abuse
X_2 is adolescent life stress
Y_1 is adolescent running away
Y_2 is adolescent alcohol abuse

In this study group, the combination of parental alcohol abuse and adolescent life stress explains 32 percent of the variation in adolescent running away and 17 percent of the variation in adolescent alcohol abuse.* Parental alcohol abuse alone (ignoring the effect of adolescent life stress) explains 9.76 percent of running away; and life stress alone (ignoring the effects of parental alcohol abuse) explains 31.27 percent. Parental alcohol abuse alone explains 8 percent of adolescent alcohol; life stress explains 11 percent.

It is clear, then, just from the cursory correlational analysis, the research questions can be answered as follows:

1) Parental alcohol abuse alone, ignoring the effects of life stress, has an effect on both adolescent running away and adolescent drinking behaviors ($r = .31$ and $.24$). Combined with life stress, parental alcohol abuse has a very strong effect on running away ($r = .32$); and a statistically significant, but lesser, effect on adolescent alcohol

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*The amount of explained variation equals the square of the correlation between dependent and independent variables.

abuse (r = .17).

2) In other words, 17 percent of the variation in adolescent alcohol abuse can be explained by the combined effects of parental alcohol abuse and life stress.
3) Parental alcohol abuse and life stress appear to have a positive linear correlation (r = .34).

More complex statistical analyses had be conducted in order to determine more accurately how much variation in adolescent running away and adolescent alcohol abuse is explained by parental alcohol abuse and life stress, and to determine whether these are linear relationships. Three statistical procedures were proposed: (1) a factor analytic reduction of variables; (2) a multiple regression; and (3) a path analysis. The findings presented in this chapter are the direct result of these statistical procedures and are represented in that order.

TABLE VIII-1

CORRELATION MATRIX OF FOUR VARIABLES IN HYPOTHESIS: ADOLESCENT RUNNING AWAY, ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL ABUSE, LIFE STRESS, AND PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE (n = 349)

	X_1 Parental Alcohol Abuse	X_2 Life Stress	Y_1 Running Away	Y_2 Adolescent Alcohol Abuse
X_1	1.00	.41172	.31239	.24153
X_2		1.00	.55874	.33631
Y_1			1.00	.1370
Y_2				1.00

Factor Analytic Reduction of Variables

Factor analysis in this study was used for two purposes:

1. To see whether the unweighted life events could be reduced to clusters of related variables;
2. To reduce the large number of independent variables (individual stress items, demographic variables) to variables which are highly correlated with the two criteria: alcohol abuse and running away.

A Factor Analysis of Unweighted Life Events produced no interpretable factors. With running away as dependent variable, the initial rotation produced 19 factors which explained 14 percent of the eigenvalue variation. According to Spearman, the eigenvalue for a single factor should explain approximately one sixth or 16.6 percent of the variance. A "Scree" test,[1] the plotting of eigenvalues and factor loadings, indicated that the eigenvalue factor line leveled off at the fourth factor. A repeat analysis with five, four, three and two factors, produced no mathematically or theoretically interpretable factors. With youth alcohol abuse as dependent variable, the number of items was 58. The 3-factor eigenvalue percentage was 6.9. With 2 factors, it was 6.87. Since 6.9 percent of 58 equals 11.9 percent (which is less than 16.6 percent), these factors were not statistically significant or interpretable.

To reduce the number of independent variables, including the separate life events items, a factor analysis was run including the dependent variables in the set. A check was made to see whether the criterions would "split" across a number of factors. The better the split, the higher the probability that the subsequent multiple regression will be worthwhile. With the criterion, API, there was no split across factors. Only in Factor 18 did API have a factor loading greater than .40. No other factors had a factor loading greater than .40.

With the criterion running away, there was a split across two factors. A factor loading of .54926 was found in the first factor. Variables in this factor, with a factor loading over .40* were the demographic variable, "I am a school dropout," and the following life events items:[2]

Life Event	*Life Event No.*
"I was picked up by the police"	30
"I was taken to court"	31
"I was put on probation"	35
"I was put in jail or reform school"	52

In the second factor, the criterion running away had a factor loading of .41036. Five life event items in this factor had factor loadings greater than .40:

Life Event	*Life Event No.*
"My parents asked me to leave home"	06
"I lost a good friend"	43
"I was beaten up"	45
"My father said he did not want me"	61
"My mother said she did not want me"	62

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*As a rule of thumb only factor loadings of .40 (occasionally .30) are considered; since the N was smaller than 400, only factor loadings of .40 were considered.

These variables appear to indicate that there is a correlation between running away, police-court contacts, parental rejection and school failure. It is interesting to note that parental alcohol abuse was not in one of the factors. From previous descriptive analysis, we theorize "beaten up" refers to physical abuse. The factor selection confirms this finding.

The question arises whether or not the police-court variables, which we decided to call the juvenile justice factor, and the parental rejection variables cancel each other out because of multicollinearity. A check of the correlation matrix of these remaining items only partially supports this contention. Only the court-dropout factor shows high inter-item correlation. See Table VIII-2.

TABLE VIII - 2

CORRELATION MATRIX OF THE FACTOR ANALYTIC SELECTED DEPENDENT VARIABLES (N = 296)

	Asked to leave home	Picked up by police	Taken to court	Put on probation	Lost a good friend	Beaten	Sent to jail/reform school	Rejected by father	Rejected by mother	Is a dropout
	L06	L30	L31	L35	L43	L45	L52	L61	L62	DROP
L06	1.	.24	.20	.12	.14	.32	.25	.31	.56	.13
L30		1.	.62	.52	.02	.23	.51	.20	.33	.32
L31			1.	.64	.08	.27	.52	.09	.28	.33
L35				1.	.04	.27	.47	.21	.29	.34
L43					1.	.27	.11	.31	.30	.05
L45						1.	.23	.36	.42	.24
L52							1.	.22	.25	.35
L61								1.	.49	.16
L62									1.	.18
DROP										1.

Table VIII-3 shows separate correlation matrices of variables in the two factors (parental rejection, including physical abuse and juvenile justice contact and dropout status).

TABLE VIII - 3

CORRELATION MATRICES FOR ITEMS IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND PARENTAL REJECTION FACTORS

(N = 296)

The parental rejection factor					
	Asked to leave home	lost good friend	beaten	rejected by father	rejected by mother
	L06	L43	L45	L61	L62
L06	1.	.14	.32	.31	.52
L43		1.	.27	.31	.30
L45			1.	.36	.42
L61				1.	.49
L62					1.

The juvenile justice factor				
	picked up by police	taken to court	put on probation	sent to reform school or jail
	L30	L31	L35	L52
L30	1.	.62	.52	.25
L31		1.	.64	.47
L35			1.	.51
L52				1.

It is possible, of course, that the juvenile justice factor is a result, not a cause, of running away, that in fact the youth who responded to the questionnaire were at the runaway center not only by virtue of being "runaways" but also by virtue of being "court-diverted" cases. Community based programs such as runaway centers are increasingly used by juvenile justice court systems as court diversion referrals.

Unfortunately, the questionnaire asked youth whether or not, as a result of their previous running away experience, they had been "helped" by the police, friends, other counseling programs, etc., but not whether this had occurred at the time of their present runaway experience.

It is likewise possible that the youth have temporarily dropped out of school while at the runaway center, although most runaway centers require that youth continue with their schooling while at the center. It was decided to add another variable, " being a poor student", to control for this possibility.

Multiple Regression Using Factor Analytically Selected Life Stress Predictors of "Running Away"

The factor analysis determined which unweighted life event items to include in the regression equation when running away is a criterion.*

The following variables were entered into the equation as a result of the factor analysis:

Life Event No. 06	"Asked to leave home"
30	"Picked up by police"
31	"Taken to court"
35	"Put on probation"
43	"Lost a friend"
52	"Sent to jail or reform school"
61	"Rejected by father"
62	"Rejected by mother"
	Being a school dropout
	Being a poor student

Because of the hypothesis, it was decided to add parental alcohol abuse. Because of high correlations with both dependent variables, three more demographic variables were added: age, density of home town, and family composition.

Table VIII-4 shows the result of a stepwise regression with running as the dependent variable. Fifty percent of the variance is explained by six predictors: "being a school dropout", "being picked up by the police", "being rejected by mother", "living in an urban environment", "going to court", and "being asked to leave home."

In the presence of these variables, no other variable increased the existing r square by more than one percent in spite of high and significant correlations with the criterion.

TABLE VIII - 4

PERCENT VARIATION IN CRITERION RUNNING AWAY EXPLAINED BY FACTOR ANALYTIC SELECTED LIFE EVENTS AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Predictor	R Square	R Square Change	Simple R
Dropout	.28624	.28624	.53502
Police	.42839	.14215	.52663
Mother Rejects	.49595	.06756	.46906
Density (home Town)	.53772	.04177	.42284
Court	.55201	.01429	.48055
Asked To Leave	.56536	.01334	.38573

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*In the factor analysis, the criterion API was not split across any factors, so this analysis applies only to the criterion running away.

Recoding the parental rejection items and the juvenile justice items into new variables, the regression equation was re-written. The new juvenile justice variable was a dichotomy: defined as "having been to court, *or* to jail/reform school, *or* put on probation, *or* picked up by the police".

The parental rejection variable was also a dichotomy, defined as "being rejected by either parent, *or* being asked to leave home".

"Being beaten" may or may not refer to physical abuse by parents. It was therefore not included in the parental rejection variable.

This time, eleven variables were entered into the regression equation: juvenile justice contact, school dropout, parental rejection, being a poor student, density of home town, age, parental alcohol abuse, sex, physical abuse, family composition, loss of a good friend.

Six variables explained nearly 62 percent of variance in running away behavior: juvenile justice contact, dropping out of school, parental rejection, urban density, young age, and "poor" academic performances. See Table VIII-5. No other variable, in the presence of these predictors, increased the r square by more than one percent.

TABLE VIII-5

PERCENT VARIATION IN CRITERION RUNNING AWAY EXPLAINED BY JUVENILE JUSTICE CONTACT, PARENTAL REJECTION, SCHOOL DROPOUT STATUS, AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Predictor	Total R Square	R Square Change	Zero Order r
Juvenile Justice Contact	.34247	.34247	.58521
School Dropout	.47073	.12826	.53353
Rejected By Either Parent	.54342	.07270	.48628
Density	.58533	.04191	.44665
Age	.60973	.02440	-.20036
Poor Student	.61983	.01010	.40496

The preceding analysis indicates clearly that there is high collinearity among variables. For, while the correlation of parental alcohol abuse and running away behavior is a significant .31, the presence of total life stress score did not explain more than one percent of the variance in adolescent running away. Individual, factor analytically selected stress items, not including parental alcohol abuse, explained as much as 62 percent of the variance.

TABLE VIII-6

PERCENT VARIATION IN CRITERION RUNNING AWAY EXPLAINED BY TOTAL LIFE STRESS, PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE, AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Predictor	Multiple R Square	R Square Change	Zero order r
Total Life Stress	.3202	.3202	.5658
Dropout Status	.4738	.1536	.5335
Age	.5023	.0284	-.2003
Poor Student	.5221	.01979	.40496
1 = Male			
Sex:			
2 = Female	.53191	.0098	-.1519
Parental Alcohol Abuse	.53523	.00332	.30081

2. Adolescent alcohol abuse

The API scores were regressed on the following variables: total life stress, age, parental alcohol abuse, school performance, runaway status, sex and the interaction between parental alcohol abuse and life stress.

As Table VIII-6 shows, life stress and age are the only variables which increased the explained variation by more than one percent. Together they explain 12.8 percent of the variance in adolescent alcohol abuse. Although parental alcohol abuse, ignoring the effect of the other variables, explains 4 percent of the variables, in the presence of life stress and age, it adds less than one percent (.9%).

TABLE VIII-7

REGRESSION OF API SCORES ON SELECTED VARIABLES

	Total R Square	R Square Change	Zero order r
Life Stress	.09406	.09406	.30670

Age	.12863	.03457	.15320
Parental Alcohol Abuse	.13789	.00926	.21016
Poor Student	.14432	.00643	.15546
Runaway Status	.15044	.00612	.11433
Sex: 1 = Male 2 = Female	.1538	.00336	-.11483

Analysis of Multiplicative Relationships Between Variables

Interaction occurs when there are more than two variables, and several variables have rather peculiar combined effects. In such instances, the joint effects are non-additive.

It was found that the relationships between parental drinking and youth drinking patterns was non-linear, if parents drank very little or were abstainers, or if they were frequently intoxicated, youth drank significantly more ($p < .001$ and $p < .017$, respectively). In the cases where the parents were moderate drinkers, however, youths' drinking was not significantly affected ($p < .34$). This might suggest the incidence of youth alcohol use.

Multiple Regression Analysis
Using Total Life Stress as Predictor

Following the multiple regression with factor analytically selected life stress and demographic variables, the effect of *total life stress* on running away and adolescent alcohol abuse.

1. *Running away*

The inclusion of life stress in a regression equation resulted in a 32 percent explanation of the variance in running away. Further variance was explained by school dropout status, age (young), and being a poor student. In all, these variables explained 52 percent of the variance in running away. See Table VIII-6.

The 52 percent variation explained by total life stress, school failure and age is considerably less than the 62 percent variation explained by regressing adolescent running away on juvenile justice contact, school dropout status, parental rejection and school failure.

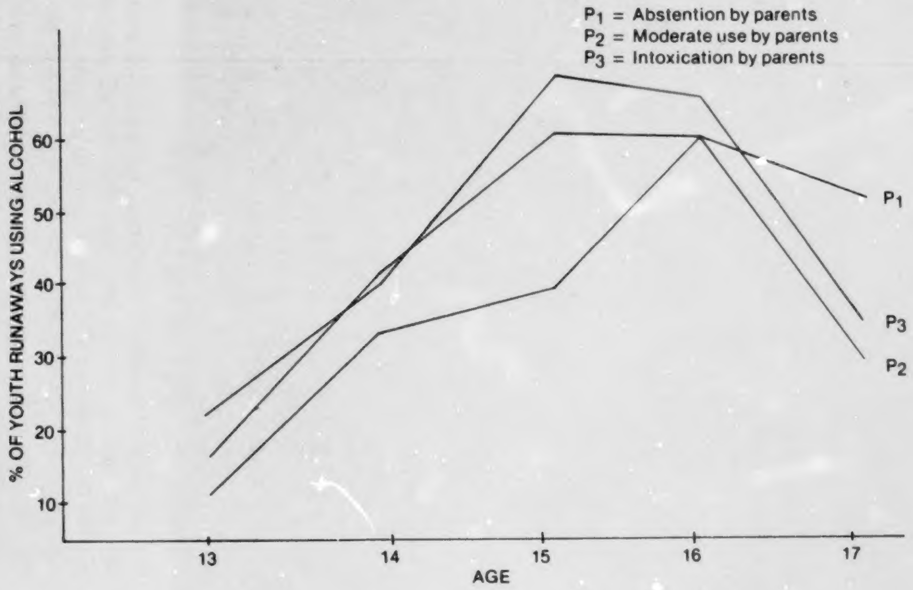
The main difference appears to be the juvenile justice contact. It is strongly suggested that this variable be further controlled and more rigorously examined in future research.

2. *Youth Alcohol Abuse*

Parental alcohol abuse was viewed as a source of stress. We therefore examined youth abuse as a result of parental models of controlled drinking. For those youth whose parents drink moderately,

TABLE VIII-8

AGE OF YOUTH AND PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH USING ALCOHOL AS A FUNCTION OF PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE



their drinking does not seem to be a problem; they learn to control it. But for those youth whose parents exhibit no controls (parents who are abstainers or frequently intoxicated) alcohol is abused.

Although significant, this interaction term, in the presence of other variables, did not increase the explained variance in running away behavior by more than one percent.

No other interaction terms were significant.

Critical Path Analysis

The underlying assumption in this causal analysis is that parental alcohol abuse (X_1) is a causative factor in adolescent life stress (X_2) and that life stress is a causative factor in both running away (Y_1) and alcohol abuse (Y_2) behaviors. This concept of causal order (the assumption that X_1 causes X_2 but that X_2 does not cause X_1) allows us to examine the regression solution through a critical path analysis.

The object of the path analysis is to see whether the indirect $X_1 \longrightarrow X_2 \longrightarrow Y$ path explains more than the direct $X_1 \longrightarrow Y$ path.

To determine the total effect, it is necessary to sum the product of the indirect path weights with the direct path weights, to see whether each change in X_1 will bring about a change in X_2 which in turn will introduce changes in Y.

1. Using running away as criterion

Based on the factor analytic selection of predictor variables, it is suggested that the model in Table VIII-9 be studied in which:

X_3 is school dropout status
X_2 is life stress
X_1 is parental alcohol abuse
Y is running away

Table VIII-10 presents the correlation matrix of these four variables.

TABLE VIII-9

PATH ANALYSIS MODEL WITH RUNNING AWAY REGRESSED
ON SCHOOL DROPOUT STATUS, LIFE STRESS,
AND PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE

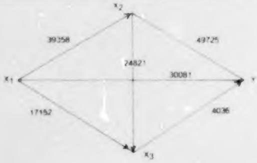


TABLE VIII-10

CORRELATION MATRIX OF RUNNING AWAY DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL, LIFE STRESS AND PARENTAL ALCOHOL ABUSE

(N = 300)

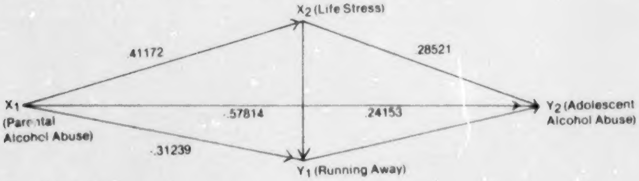
0	0	X_1	X_2	X_3	Y
X_1	Parental Alcohol Abuse	1.0	.4117	.17152	.31239
X_2	Life Stress		1.0	.27727	.55874
X_3	School Dropout Status			1.0	.53353
Y	Running Away Behavior				1.0

In the path diagram, the path weights are standardized regression coefficients. The error term associated with each criterion is the square root of 1 minus r^2. Parental alcohol abuse is taken as unanalyzed and does not have a separate error term.

The direct Y - X^1 path is .30081. The indirect path is the product of the direct path weights. The Y - X_3 - X_2 - X_2 - X_1 path product is .03942; the Y - X_3 - X_1 path product is .6922; the Y - X_2 - X_1 path product is .19707.

It appears, therefore, that since the indirect effects are less than the direct effects, that a more parsimonious regression solution can be obtained through a simple regression of "running away" on "life stress".

2. Using adolescent alcohol abuse as criterion

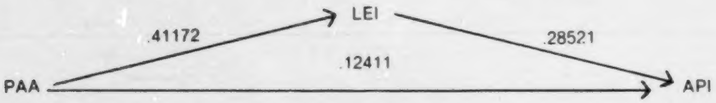

X_2 (Life Stress)
.41172
28521
X_1 (Parental Alcohol Abuse)
.57814
.24153
Y_2 (Adolescent Alcohol Abuse)
.31239
Y_1 (Running Away)

The matrix is:

	X_1	X_2 X	Y_2	Y_1
X_1	1.0	.411	.241	.3123
X_2	1.0	1.0	.336	.558
Y_2			1.0	.136
Y_1				1.0

Again, the indirect path was no greater than the direct path.

Dropping running away from the path diagram, the path analysis looks as follows:



The direct PAA → API is .12411; the indirect PAA → LEI → API path is less (.41172 x .28521 = .11743). the greatest path is LEI → API (.28521).

It is clear from this final check that life stress is a greater predictor of adolescent alcohol than parental alcohol abuse is.

Conclusion

From the preceding analysis, it appears that the strongest predictors of adolescent running away behavior are contacts with the juvenile justice system, parental rejection, including physical abuse (specifically by parents who abuse alcohol), and school failure. The runaway is also more likely to be a young adolescent, to live in an urban environment and to be part of a family which has experienced divorce or separation. Although total life stress is a predictor of youth alcohol abuse, it is not as strong a predictor as it is of running away behavior.

The following chapter will summarize and interpret these findings in light of existing theory on adolescent running away behavior and youth alcohol abuse.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VIII

1. Kerlinger, F.N. *Foundation of Behavioral Research,* New York, Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, P. 663.
2. Cattell, R.B. The Scree test for the number of factors. *Multivariate Behavior Research.* Vol. 1, pp. 245-276. As cited in Harman, H.H. *Modern Factor Analysis,* Chicago. University of chicago Press, 1976.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report, *Adolescent Life Stress as a Predictor of Alcohol Abuse and/or Runaway Behavior* presents the research findings of the second year (1975-1976) of the study on Alcohol Abuse Among Runaways and Their Families conducted by the National Youth Alternatives Project (NYAP) and funded by NIAAA grant # AA 01525. The report also includes a substudy on the relation of the life stress to adolescent running away behavior.

Introduction

In April 1974, six months prior to the onset of this national project, NYAP sponsored and NIAAA funded an exploratory conference on alcohol abuse and runaway youth. Information received during this conference (contact # ADM 41-74-0012) supported on-going reports from the field indicating that runaways and their families were seriously affected by alcohol abuse. This conference highlighted the need for specialized alcohol training of runaway counselors; it neither documented the incidence of alcohol abuse among runaways and their families nor provided ongoing training. In response to the 1974 conference, NYAP developed an initial proposal to NIAAA to undertake a substantial data collection and training project.

From its inception in October 1974, the project simultaneously addressed the need both to assess the scope of the problem through research and to respond to the problem of alcohol abuse among runaways and their families through counselor training in 15 nationally representative runaway centers selected for the project. Initially the research focused on determining the needs of the individual client; training to runaway counselors emphasized the knowledge and skills needed to effectively help runaways and families involved in alcohol abuse. During the second year, the research expanded to assessing etiology of youth alcohol abuse (specifically life stress) and the effect of parental alcohol abuse on runaway behavior.

The first year findings indicated that eighty percent of 480 runaway youth surveyed in 15 nationally representative runaway centers used alcohol at least occassionally. Over half appeared to be heavy users, if not abusers (using a definition of alcohol abuse based on known correlates and predictors of alcohol abuse). There was also indication of a positive correlation between parental alcohol abuse and youth alcohol abuse.

Both adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away behaviors, their causes and implications for youth and society, have been the subject of much media attention, social research and conjecture. Stress, too, has become commonplace in media technology as well as in scientific glossaries. Perhaps no one has better illustrated the effect of stress on modern man than Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock.*[1] Today's adolescent faces changes, decisions and traditional family pattern breakdown at a heretofore unknown level.

A review of the literature shows that there has been an on-going debate about the etiology of running away and alcohol abuse. The current consensus is that for both behaviors, psychopathological and situational factors are closely interrelated. A close examination of the literature on both running away and adolescent alcohol abuse clearly shows a parallel between correlates of adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away. A common theme in the literature regarding both behaviors is stress, anxiety or maladjustment faced by an individual with poor self-esteem and/or reduced coping capacities.

As a result of the NYAP first year findings and a review of the available literature, the second year effort sought to define situational stress factors, life events, and to determine the degree of correlation between these life events, adolescent running away, and alcohol abuse behaviors. It was hypothesized that there is a positive correlation between stress inducing life events, particularly but not exclusively, parental alcohol abuse, adolescent running away and adolescent alcohol abuse.

One limitation of the first year study was the lack of a non-runaway control group. To overcome it NYAP researchers contacted several schools and were able to include in the study a comparison sample of over 300 non-runaways.

A second limitation was the lack of a precise, measurable definition of alcohol abuse. In order to overcome it, the Alcohol Problem Index (API) was developed, tested, and validated with a sample of 900 youths, 600 runaways and 300 non-runaways. It has proven to have statistical validity and reliability. The API was developed in accordance with the major findings and philosophies of youth alcohol researchers which indicate that problem drinking is best measured not by a frequency-quantity index, but by an examination of the youth's reasons for drinking, "setting" and effects of drinking.

The API was developed to quantify and identify those characteristics and behavior which are most indicative of youth alcohol abuse.

In addition, an Adolescent Life Events Inventory (LEI) was developed by NYAP researchers to explore the relationship between stressful life events, adolescent alcohol abuse and adolescent running away. The development of the Life Events Inventory, a measure of stress, was based on the adult inventory known as the

Holmes and Rahe Scale, [2] and a revised adolescent version, developed by Dr. Margaret Beyer. [3] The LEI was developed to identify those events most likely to cause stress and perhaps subsequent running away or drinking behaviors.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not alcohol abuse and running away can be viewed as a response to, or an escape from, life stress experienced by the adolescent. Parental alcohol abuse was identified as a specific form of life stress.

Summary of Findings

The study sample consisted of 900 youths: 600 runaways who were interviewed in runaway centers from across the country, and 300 non-runaway high school students who were interviewed in a classroom setting. * To determine alcohol abuse the Alcohol Problem Index was developed specifically for this study. Similiary an adolescent life events inventory was developed to measure life stress and determine stress predictors of running away and alcohol abuse behavior. Final analysis of the data supported positive correlation between adolescent alcohol abuse, running away and parental alcohol abuse and provided a more detailed profile of the adolescent runaway and alcohol abuser.

Simple frequency and cross tabulation analysis revealed similarities in the reported behavior of runaways and non-runaway drinking patterns. Eighty percent of youth in each group drink and 60 percent of each group reported drinking regularly. Almost one-fourth of the youth in each group drink with the purpose of getting drunk and one out of ten drink more than their friends. Ten percent of each group have been arrested after drinking, usually for drunk driving or creating a disturbance.

Furthermore, the frequency of liquor consumption for both groups was nearly identical. Forty percent of the runaways and non-runaways preferred to drink beer and one-third of them drank five or more bottles or cans at one sitting.

Although many of the characteristics of runaways and non-runaways are similar, a number of variables which differentiate between the groups were found. These variables reveal a disruptive familial and social system. Only one-third of the runaways were from homes with both natural parents, and the transitory nature of their lives is indicated by the fact that, of those not living with both parents, one third have lived in the new home less than three years.

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* Although approximately 12 percent of the youth in the latter group said that at one time or another in the past they had run away from home, statistical annalysis indicated that this past runaway behavior need not be taken into account in analyzing the data.

Disruption caused by parents divorced was also highly prevalent among runaways with a reported incidence of 42.8 percent as compared to 29.5 percent among non-runaways.

The school setting seemed to be a stressful area for running youth. Of those still in school, almost fifteen times as many runaways as non-runaways categorized themselves as being poor students. Perhaps as a result of this failure, over one-fourth of the runaways had dropped out of school.

This cluster of disruptive and stressful social and familial factors for runaway youth could account for the predominatly negative reasons the runaway youth gave for their drinking and the negative self-reported consequences of drinking.

We found that the majority of running youths started drinking much earlier than the non-runaway youth, predominantly between the ages of 13 and 15. Perhaps as a result of their environments, the reasons for drinking were mainly negative or indicative of escape. Not surprisingly, the runaways were less likely to drink "when happy." they were found, however, *more* likely to drink "when nervous or worried", "when bored", "when angry", and "to be accepted". Furthermore, many of the youth who drank for the preceeding reasons also drank to get drunk.

The results of drinking also tended to be clustered around negative effects. One of the biggest problems the runaway youth encountered was conflict as a result of drinking. Almost one-third had conflicts with parents or school authorities as a result of drinking. This group was also more likely to have had accidents or serious fights following a drinking episode.

Parental alcohol use/abuse, when seen as a parental role modeling process, was one of the most significant factors in youth's drinking. Analysis showed that if parents exhibited no controls over their drinking, either in the form of abstinence or frequent intoxication, the controls needed for responsible drinking were not learned by their children. These youth were seen as abusing alcohol much more often than those youths whose parents drank moderately. It seems that the latter youths learn responsible drinking patterns from their parents.

Identification of the factor which discriminated between the youth who were likely to run and abuse alcohol and those not likely to run and abuse alcohol led to a correlational analysis of these two behaviors. While the direct correlation coefficient was not significant ($r = .0358$, $p < .17$), many intervening factors were identified which correlated highly with both behaviors. The youth who were likely to engage in both running away and who abused alcohol showed a definite pattern of negative consequences of drinking as well as disruption in the family, school, and community.

Further analysis showed that females were more affected by both parents alcohol use/abuse ($r = .2237$, $p < .001$) than males, who seemed to look only to their father ($r = .1463$), not to both parents as role models. This was true for its effects on both adolescent alcohol abuse and running away. This differential response by sex was also obtained when examining the role of living arrangements on these two behaviors. While being institutionalized correlated highly for both males and females ($r = .0875$, $r = .1195$) with both running away and alcohol abuse, a look at other types of family composition, showed that males were more likely to run and abuse alcohol if living with one parent ($r = .10$, $p < .01$), and females, if living in a reconstituted home ($r = .1081$, $p < .01$).

It was also found that the age factor correlated highly with both running away and alcohol abuse. The younger the person the more likely he/she was to run and the younger he/she started to drink, the more likely the development of later drinking problems. Among youth of all ages the largest cluster of problems was presented by the younger youth, aged 13 to 15, especially for the 14 year olds, also significantly correlated with running away behavior ($r = .314$ and .30 respectively).

Looking at the factors most highly correlated with adolescent alcohol abuse, it was found that while total life stress accounted for 11.2 percent of the variance, certain stress variables and demographic variables explained a greater amount of the variance in adolescent alcohol abuse. The following list of variables explain 34.3 percent of youth alcohol abuse: the age of the youth, being a school dropout, having a poor school record, type of home (especially not living with both parents), divorce in the family, density of home town, parental alcohol abuse, and conflict as a result of drinking.

To sum up, the following variables are strong predictors of running away behavior, and statstically significant, but lesser predictors of adolescent alcohol abuse: parental alcohol abuse, age, density of home town, family breakdown and school failure. Even stronger predictors of runaway behavior are contact with the juvenile justice system and parental rejection. This latter variable is highly correlated with parental alcohol abuse.

Discussion of Major Stress Predictors of Running Away and Adolescent Alcohol Abuse

School Failure

School dropout status was the second most significant predictor of adolescent running away behavior ($r = .53$) as well as one of the highest predictors of alcohol abuse ($r = .3229$). Since it is possible that some of the youth temporarily dropped out of school while attending the runaway center, or dropping out and running away co-occured, the variable "being a poor student" was then added to the regression equation and found to be significantly correlated ($r = .40$). It can there be stated that school failure is a definite predictor of running away. This confirms findings of other researchers, notably the Shellow report on suburban runaways, that academic failure is highly correlated with running away.[4]

The recent survey on runaways conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation finds that male runners are characterized by greater school difficulty than females. The females, on the other hand, experienced greater difficulty in the home situation. Younger runaways reported the greatest dislike of school as well as greater problems in dealing with parents.[5] This latter finding was corroborated by our findings which show a significant increase in running away among females ($r = .20$) and to some extent among younger males ($p < .09$).

This finding raises many questions which can only be answered by future research, but should be kept in mind by all those who work with runaway youth, youth who abuse alcohol, and/or youth who fail in school, whether it be at the service delivery, program planning or policy making level.

Parental Rejection

The importance of this variable indicates that the youthful runaway has not only failed in school and in society (as evidenced by his/her contact with the police and courts) but also at home. Or perhaps, that he/she has been failed by the school, society, and parents.

Over eighty percent of the runaways run because of family problems. The correlation between running and "rejection by mother" is .44, between running and "rejection by father" is .30, between running and "being asked to leave home" is .37. "Being beaten" was so highly correlated with these parental rejection items ($r = .36$ and .42) that it can be safely assumed that it refers to physical abuse by parent.

The literature on runaways includes repeated referrals to *throwaways.* The parental rejection factor found in this study appears to statistically identify and define the throwaway (the unwanted adolescent, the youth whose parents do not object to their leaving home even though they have no place to go).

The Opinion Research Corporation's National Statistical Survey On RunawayYouth[6] interviewed 411 runaways who were still on the run. They found a group of "non-returners" whose families were characterized by a high degree of negative family dynamics, including parental alcohol abuse. Major differences in child rearing practices between parents of runaways and non-runaways dealt with the amount of assistance, comfort, communicating and liking offered by the parents.

Parental Alcohol Abuse

Although parental alcohol abuse appears to be a significant factor in parental rejection, it does not, in the presence of parental rejection, add significantly to the explained variation of running away or of youth's own alcohol abuse. It is, however, significantly correlated to both behaviors and shows a possible causal relationship which should be investigated by those who work with runaway youth.

Youth who live in a home where the mother abuses alcohol are likely to have a father who abuses alcohol. Alcohol abuse in the home, more often then not, is known to the youth's friends. This cluster of events influences rejection by parents, being asked to leave home, and physical abuse. The relation between physical abuse and parental alcohol abuse has been reported by protective service and social workers. Most reports to date are based on subjective impressions or inconclusive data. Theory reveals a parallel between family child abuse factors and alcohol abuse factors; social isolation; low frustration, low self-esteem, depression, role reversals (children functioning as adults).

Urban Density of Home Town

It is generally concluded from most studies of runaways that most runaways are from urban environments, because most runaway centers tend to be in urban settings. A study by the Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation on the incidence and nature of runaway behavior[7] finds that runaways are primarily from urban-suburban areas. their data shows that regardless of which estimate is used (parent report only; combined parent-youth report; or social service system contact), the runaway rate for the urban-suburban area is approximately two to three times larger than the rate for the rural area, both for the percent of youth population and the percent of households. This, coupled with the high population density in urban-suburban areas, points to a preponderance of runaways from these areas. Even intensive efforts by the BREC research team to locate runaways in two Colorado rural counties resulted only in the location of five runaways.

Life Stress

These common predictors of adolescent alcohol abuse and running away behavior are life stress factors. *Total* life stress consisting of the stress induced by these and other variables is another common predictor. It is particularly interesting to note that while a cursory frequency-quantity comparison of the drinking behavior of runaways and non-runaways shows little or no difference, there is a difference in the youths' stated reasons for drinking and the effects of their drinking. Runaways, who according to our findings tend to have experienced a great deal of life stress, also tend to drink to avoid stress and to experience conflict as a result of drinking. It is this stress-conflict cycle which discriminates between the drinking behavior of runaways and non-runaways. As indicated by the analysis the runaway is more likely to be a younger adolescent.

The alcohol abusing non-runaway on the other hand tends to be older and although he/she experiences more stress than the non-alcohol abuser, it is still less stress than that experienced by the runaway. His/her drinking is also less likely to be characterized by the stress-conflict cycle of the alcohol abusing runaway.

The implications of these findings on appropriate treatment methodologies need to be further explored. It would appear that a primary prevention program could benefit youth who drink excessively, but are not caught up in the stress cycle.

Youth, particularly runaways, whose drinking behavior (and perhaps other behavior too) is characterized by a stress-conflict pattern, will need intervention rather than prevention services.

Further research needs to be done to explore the relation of coping responses to situational life stress to the life stage crisis of early adolescence.

Conclusion

Findings support the theory that running away and alcohol abuse are a response to situational stress, including parental alcohol abuse, and family dysfunction. Although life stress is a stronger predictor of running away than of alcohol abuse, the influence of life stress on the latter behavior cannot be discarded.

It was also found that runaways do not appear to drink any more or less than non-runaways. They are, however, more likely to drink to avoid stress and to experience conflict and stress as a result of drinking. If program planners are aware of these differential drinking characteristics they can use this information as a basis for developing prevention and/or intervention services for runaway and other youth who are experiencing personal or parental alcohol problems.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IX

1. Tofler, Alvin *Future Shock*, New York: Random House, 1970.
2. Holmes, T.H. and Rahe R. The Social Readjustment Rating Scale. *Psychosomatic Research*, 1967, *11*, 213.
3. Beyer, M. *Psychosocial Problems of Running Away*, Doctoral Dissertation, Yale University, 1974.
4. Shellow, R. Scamp, J. R., Liebow, E. and Unger, E. *Suburban Runaways of the 1960's*, Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 1967, *32* (3).
5. Brennan, T., Blanchard, E., Huizinga, D., and Elliot, D. *Final Report: The Incidence and Nature of Runaway Behavior* (Report prepared for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation, DHEW) Boulder, Colorado: Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation, 1975.
6. Opinion Research Corporation, *National Statistical Survey of Runaway Youth*, part II (prepared for the Office of Youth Development. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, under contract number HEW - 105 - 75 - 2105), Princeton, N.J. 1976.
7. Brennan, T. *op. cit.* pp. 107-110.

APPENDIX A

Alcohol Problem Index

You are being asked to participate in a study about the needs and problems of youth. We are particularly interested in learning more about youth and alcohol.

Information you give us will help youth workers plan and provide the best possible services for youth who need help because of alcohol use.

All of your answers are very important to us, even if you never or hardly ever drink alcohol.

By alcohol we mean beer, wine, whiskey or any other drink containing alcohol.

In order for the survey to be of any value, it is very important that you be honest in answering the questions. We would rather you skip a question than put down a false answer.

This a NOT A TEST, and there are no right or wrong answers. Participation in the survey is voluntary.

You will not be asked to put your name on the questionnaire, and all of your answers will be kept secret. The names of the individuals who participated in the survey will never be known.

Please look quickly at the questions. Would you be willing to participate in this survey?

( ) Yes ( ) No Please explain why not:

____

____

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this survey. If at any time you have questions or find a word you do not understand, ask one of the persons in charge.
TURN THE PAGE.

Youth ID:____________________

Date: ______________________

Youth ID: ___________________

Please answer every question after reading it carefully. Answer each question in turn. If you do not find the exact answer you want, circle the answer that comes closest.

1. Do you ever drink any kind of alcohol?
   1) yes 2) no
2. Do you drink.

1) at parties?	yes	no
2) when you are by yourself?	yes	no
3) on special occasions?	yes	no

3. Do you drink before school hours?
   1) never
   2) rarely
   3) frequently
4. Do you drink after school?
   1) never
   2) rarely
   3) frequently
5. Do you drink during school?
   1) never
   2) rarely
   3) frequently
6. Have you ever become drunk after drinking by yourself?
   1) yes 2) no
7. This question asks you why you drink. It is possible that you drink for all the reasons listed, or for only some of the reasons. Circle all of the appropriate answers.

1) I drink when I am sad or depressed	yes	no
2) I drink when I am nervous or worried	yes	no
3) I drink when I am bored	yes	no
4) I drink when I am angry	yes	no
5) I drink to be viewed by my friends as cool or tough	yes	no
6) I drink to show adults I am mature and old enough to drink	yes	no
7) I drink to get drunk	yes	no
8) I drink for other reasons: (explain)	yes	no

____

8. Do you drink more than your friends?
   1) yes
   2) no
   3) sometimes

9. Have you ever been arrested for anything following a drinking episode?
   1) yes (explain): ______________________________
   ____
   2) no

10. Have you ever been *unable* to remember what happened during a drinking espisode?
   1) no
   2) once
   3) more than once

11. This question asks about the effects of your drinking. It may be that you have experienced all of these effects, or only some. Circle the appropriate answers.

1) My drinking has interfered with my school work	yes	no
2) My drinking has caused my to lose a friend of the same sex	yes	no
3) My drinking has caused me to lose a friend of the opposite sex	yes	no
4) My drinking has caused me to lose a job	yes	no
5) My drinking has caused me to drop out of school	yes	no
6) My drinking has caused an injury or accident	yes	no
7) My drinking has caused serious fights	yes	no
8) My drinking has caused major conflicts between me and my parents	yes	no
9) My drinking has caused me to come before school authorities	yes	no
10) My drinking has had other effects (please explain)	yes	no

____
____

12. At what age did you start drinking alcohol? ______________

13. Do you feel you have a drinking problem?
   1) yes 2) no

14. At what age did you first think you had a problem?__________

15. How often do you drink alcohol?
    1) daily
    2) almost every weekend
    3) more often than every weekend; or more than once a week, but less often than daily

APPENDIX B

Adolescent Life Events Inventory, LEI

On the following pages are a list of events which may have happened to you.

Circle the *yes* after the event *if it happened to you during the past 12 months.*

If it did not happen to you in the past 12 months, circle the *no* and move on to the next item.

Do not skip any items.

EXAMPLE:

I changed schools [✓ yes] no

Means that you changed schools in the past 12 months.

EXAMPLE: My father was hospitalized yes [✓ no]

Means that your father was *not* hospitalized in the past 12 months.

Thank you . . . .

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE.

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Date:_____ _______________

Youth ID:__________________

Please read all items and circle the appropriate answer.

Your answers are anonymous and confidential.

I got poor grades in school	yes	no
I got into trouble for cutting classes	yes	no
My father was laid off	yes	no
My father was fired	yes	no
My mother was fired	yes	no
My parents asked me to leave home	yes	no
My parents seemed more worried about money	yes	no
I got into trouble with a teacher or principal at school	yes	no
I got into trouble for fighting in school	yes	no
My father said he did not want me	yes	no
My mother died	yes	no
My father died	yes	no
My brother or sister died	yes	no
One of my grandparents died	yes	no
Another relative died	yes	no
I moved to another house	yes	no
I was accused of doing something wrong that I did not do	yes	no
My mother was sick or hurt	yes	no
My father was sick or hurt	yes	no
My brother or sister was sick or hurt	yes	no
A good friend of mine was sick or hurt	yes	no
I was hospitalized	yes	no
My mother was hospitalized	yes	no
My father was hospitalized	yes	no
My brother or sister was hospitalized	yes	no
My friend found out my mother was an alcoholic	yes	no
My friend found out my father was an alcoholic	yes	no
My friend found out my brother or sister was an alcoholic	yes	no
I was picked up by the police	yes	no
I was taken to court	yes	no
I realized my mother was an alcoholic	yes	no
I realized my father was an alcoholic	yes	no
I realized my brother or sister was an alcoholic	yes	no
I was put on probation	yes	no
A relative asked me to leave his/her home	yes	no
I was sick or hurt	yes	no

Youth ID:____________________

I got someone pregnant, or	yes	no
I got pregnant	yes	no
I got V. D.	yes	no
My steady boyfriend or girlfriend broke up with me	yes	no
I lost a good friend	yes	no
I was robbed	yes	no
I was beaten up	yes	no
My mother said she did not want me	yes	no
My father was put in a mental hospital	yes	no
My mother was put in a mental hospital	yes	no
I was put in a mental hospital	yes	no
I was raped	yes	no
My mother was put in jail	yes	no
My father was put in jail	yes	no
I was put in jail or reform school	yes	no
My parents got divorced	yes	no
I had to choose which parent to live with	yes	no
My brother or sister ran away from home	yes	no
My brother or sister had trouble with my parents	yes	no
I got into trouble for doing drugs in school	yes	no
My parents were fighting more than usual	yes	no
My parents threatened to leave each other	yes	no
My parents separated	yes	no

NATIONAL YOUTH ALTERNATIVES PROJECT
IS A RESOURCE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER

Newsletter

Youth Alternatives, NYAP's acclaimed monthly newsletter, reports on issues and events in the nation's capital and across the country which affect youth and youth workers. In-depth coverage is provided on federal, state, and local activities under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act, the Youth Employment Act, and the Runaway Youth Act; as well as in such areas at networking and coalition building, fundraising, alcohol and drug abuse, child abuse and neglect, foster care, juvenile law, research, and much more. In addition, each issue contains listings on new resources, job opportunities, and upcoming conferences and meetings. Write for a free sample issue.

Publications and Seminars

NYAP offers publications and intensive two day seminars on a variety of topics of vital interest to youth workers. These include:

—Local and Federal Fundraising for Community Based Youth Services
—Juvenile Justice
—Youth Employment
—Youth Services Management and Administration
—HEW Youth Services
—Participating in and Influencing State and Federal Youth Policies
—Alternative Programs
—Youth Services Planning

Use the coupon on the right to request further information.

National Youth Workers Conference

Each summer NYAP sponsors the National Youth Workers Conference, a three day training conference for all those who work with youth. To minimize costs, the conference is held on university campuses in alternating sections of the country. Previous conferences have had well over 1,200 participants and close to 100 workshops. Use the coupon on the right to obtain information on this year's conference.

Affiliation Program

In 1976, NYAP began an Affiliation program for coalitions of community based youth services. In addition to being part of a national political alliance for youth advocacy, affiliates receive special support and organizational development services from NYAP. Affiliates also receive early information on federal legislation and funding opportunities, direct access to NYAP staff and resources, and reduced rates for NYAP sponsored conferences and seminars. Representatives from affiliates serve on NYAP's Board of Directors.

Mail to:
National Youth Alternatives Project
1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear NYAP,

Please send the following items I have checked.

☐ A sample issue of **Youth Alternatives** and current subscription information
☐ A description and price list of your current publications
☐ Further information on your seminars
☐ Information on your annual National Youth Workers Conference

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